

The crisis in the Fourth International and the Canadian Section from 1970

PART 3: The crisis in the politics of the Canadian Section

lc Labor Challenge

Fwd Forward

LLO La Lutte Ouvrière

Lib Libération

1966 – (not scanned)

“The reconquest of Quebec” – undeclared minority tendency submission
to 1966 Convention LSO/LSA M. Bourhis (Michael Mill)

1970 (not scanned)

1970-7July IDB No. 4 1. “Thesis on problems in building the revolutionary party in Canada” M. Mill
 2. “Declaration of tendency” by Mill, Paul, Rousseau & Peillard
 3. “Five years of struggle against liquidationism – a history of Mike Mill” by A. Young

1970-8Aug IDB No. 9 “The Quebec socialist revolution and the national question” – Minority document by – G. Rousseau
 “On the worldwide youth radicalization” – K. Kelly, Toronto

1970-9Sept IDB No. 10 – “Which way for Native liberation” – Jeff Choy-Hee, Edmonton LSA
 “Proposals for building our press” – K. Frost & J. Katz, St. Catharines LSA
 “Revolutionary strategy and the labor party” – The Minority
 “For a single Quebec organization” – Minority Tendency, by Leon Peillard

1970-7July- (loose) “The Product is only as good as the Theory” (J. Mill, minority tendency LSO)\

1970

11Nov-lc20-2 (article) Entire Left is target of Bill (War Measures Act applied against Quebec)

1971

1Jan - (*text of 1968 adopted resolution*) “Canada-US Relations”

5May24 “Canadian Trotskyism – 50 Years of revolutionary socialism”

7July9 (*Labor Challenge*) “LSA deplores split in Trotskyist ranks” (RCT in Red Circle and Old Mole join RMG)

9Sept1 Report on suspension of Maritimes (youth comrades) (see Additional files below)

9Sept27 “The Origins of Canadian Trotskyism”

11Nov8a What role for socialists in the NDP? New Brunswick events spark debate (revolutionary left can't be built by bypassing NDP), by P. Kent

11Nov8b (continuation) Reader says we're wrong on the NDP (letter)

11Nov8c Split in New Brunswick NDP (as union delegates walk out after left program adopted)

11Nov15b Finding of the PC (on the Maritimes suspensions)

11Nov-lc44 Mandel tour of Canada

12Dec6 “Trotskyism and World Revolution” by Ernest Mandel

12Dec-lc45 The Grey Report – What's in it for us? (D. Fidler)

12Dec-lc45 Foreign capital dominates

12Dec-lc46 Big crowds hear Marxist economist (*Mandel on Canadian tour*) – Tariq Ali on tour

12Dec-lc46 Tariq Ali tour next January

99a (*text – Foreword*) The Socialist Vanguard and the New Democratic Party

99b (*text – document of the LSA/LSO) The SV & the NDP (by R. Dowson)*

1972

4Apr-lc53 LSA statement on Argentine kidnapping -
4Apr-lc53 What strategy for a French Quebec (unilingualism)
4Apr-lc53 Debate on Canadian unions – struggle for autonomy. by Ron Haywood (R.D.?)
10Oct9-1x LSA/LSO elects new Exec-Secretary – J. Riddell
99-1 (Chile Pamphlet cover)
99-2 Lessons of the Coup “Behind the Coup in Chile”
99-3 F.I. Statement “The nature of Allende's government” (partial text)
99-4 *Labor Challenge*: “Where the Canadian C.P. goes wrong”

=====not scanned=====

1972-9Sept-DB13-1a *Documents of the Mill-Peillard-Leroux split (cover)*
1972-9Sept-DB13-1b-2-3-4-5 Statement by the Political Committee (LSA/LSO)
1972-9Sept-DB13-2 Letter from PC Central Executive Council LJS-YS- 6-7-8-9-10-11-12-13-14
1972-9Sept-DB13-3 Letter of the RCT to the PC – 15-16
1972-9Sept-DB13-4 Letter from the CO (LSA-LSO) to Branches and Members-at-large – 17-18
1972-73-1Jan/73-DB#26 – *The NDP line in the New Brunswick fiasco* – Davis, Smith, Van Wart
The RCT position on the NDP by B. Smiley, RCT
Tasks before the LSA in Ontario Waffle – A. Mintz, West Toronto Branch
Counter Report of the RCT on Ontario NDP prior to Left Caucus Conference – by Hart
1972-73-4Apr/73 -DB #28 – *The Revolutionary communist (RCT) position on students (ON FILE)*
1972-73-4Apr/73 -DB #29 – *Social Democracy and the LSA – The roots of degeneration (RCT)*
1972-73-4Apr/73 -DB #32 – *Women's liberation – A counter-document* – Pat Schulz, East Toronto
1972-73-4Apr/73 -DB #36 – A. The unity process with the Red Circle – PC report by G. Porter
A. Documents of the unity dicussion with the Red Circle
1972-73-4Apr9/73- DB#44 #1 – Our liquidation into the Ontario Waffle – M. Gandall RMG
#2 – Declaration of the Majority Tendency (see B1b)
1972-73-4Apr9/73- DB#45 Contradictions of Canadian capitalism & tasks of revolutionary
communists – Counter political resolution of the RCT
1972-73-4Apr/73 -DB #48 1. Counter International Resolution (RCT-Smith & Tregebov)
1972-73-4Apr19/73 DB#57 *The United Tendency “Canadianizes” Marxism* (A. Beiner, LSO)

Young Socialist/Ligue des Jeunes Socialistes DOCUMENTS

YS/LJS-DB-72 V.8#3 – *Documents of the Revolutionary Communist Tendency*
YS/LJS-DB-72 V.8#6 – *Appeal to the EC-YS/LJS (Plenum)* – W. Offley and Reply – A. Capp – to Report on
behalf of Halifax Local
YS/LJS-DB-72 V.8#8 – *Counter Political Report of the RCT to the EC*
YS/LJS-DB-72 V.8#9 – International Report (YS/LJS Plenum) Scanned & listed on B-1b
YS/LJS-DB-72 V.8#12 – *The Revolutionary Communist Position on Quebec (Montreal split letter excerpt)*
*YS/LJS-DB-72 V.8#13 – *The Revolutionary Communist Position on Students* – M. Tregebov & M. Smith
*YS/LJS-DB-72 V.8#18 – *The Revolutionary Communist Position on the Nationalism Debate* – M. Smith RCT &
Appendix: *Nationalism and Canada* – R. Thompson incl. RCT disclaimer (on file)

1973

1972-73-3Mar -DB #32 – *Women's liberation: A counter-document*, by Pat Schulz
1972-73-3Mar -DB #36 – *The Unity process with the Red Circle; PC report to LSA Metro assembly*

Documents of the unity discussion with the Red Circle

1972-73-3Mar -DB #45 – *The Contradictions of Canadian Capitalism & the Tasks of Revolutionary communists (counter Political Resolution of the RCT) (ON FILE)*
1973-4Apr -DB #48-1 *Counter International Resolution (RCT-Smith & Tregebov) (ON FILE)*
1973-4Apr -DB #48-2 (3pp: 57-59) *Did the PC suppress the Germain document? (A.Y.) (text in B-1)*

1973 – VOL 1 NO 3 “Splitters”

12Dec-a *LSA/LSO Information Bulletin Vol. 1 No. 3*

1. *Splitters from the Canadian Section attempt to justify their walkout – W. Davis, RMG*
2. *LSA/LSO leadership calls on splitters to rejoin the Canadian Section – PC-LSA/LSO*

Appendix I: The RCT's letter of resignation

App. II: The non-existent PC motion on “Factional use of LSA/LSO resources” (on file)

12Dec-b *LSA/LSO Information Bulletin Vol. 1 No. 4 (Convention reports)*

1. *Organizational Report by G. Porter for the PC*
2. *Special contribution by A. Young*
3. *Reply to Young by B. Smiley*
4. *Special contribution by G. Porter*
5. *Summary RCT Organizational report by M. Gandal*
6. *Summary Organization Report by G. Porter*
7. *Report on Offley-David appeals by J. Riddell*

1974

(End of Labor Challenge archive – See Riddell leadership tendency archives beyond this point)

Socialist League – Forward Group archive

1974-1Jan-1a *LSA/LSO IB Vol. 2 No. 1 Material from the Jan. 1974 Plenum – I (cover)*

1974-1Jan-1b 1. *Introductory note*

1974-1Jan-1c 2. *Appeal for a political discussion of the real issues, by A. Young*

1974-1Jan-1d 3. *Response by Ross Dowson*

1Jan Cover – pamphlet: “Subversion of the r.v. orientation--”

1Jan Pamphlet: “The subversion of the revolutionary socialist orientation to the New Democratic Party” – a summary document of the struggle against it.”

3Mar18 18 members of LSA/LSO announce resignations (Ross Dowson and United Tendency)

4April IB – V.2#1 – Jan. Plenum: *Introduction – Appeal by A.Y. – Response by R.D.*

4April IB – V.2#5c – *The clearly defined and overriding difference (J.R.)*

4April IB – V.2#5d – *Comments on NDP and NDP governments (Ross D.)*

4April IB – V.2#5e – *What it means to say an NDP government is bourgeois (A.Y.)*

6June15 Cover – “Against sectarianism – the challenge of the labor party”

6June “Against sectarianism” (by 3 members SL/FG)

7July1 Fwd-1 editorial: *“How we see it”*

10Oct1 Fwd-3 (2 pp) *“American socialist fighter – J.P. Cannon” by Dowson*

1975

1Jan8 Fwd-5 *“US building trades sabotage Canadian (union) autonomy”*

3Mar1-6 Fwd-7 *Comments on Canada, by the Fourth International*

15-2 Fwd-8 *The debate widens on the naure of Canda – Mandel*

15-2 Fwd-8-15-3 *Forward Issue #8 Mandel on Canadian speaking tour*

15-2 *Fwd-5 Mounting attacks by bankers, bosses on Canadian nationalism*
 15-2 *Fwd-5 Myth and reality of class in Canada – review by Dowson*

1976

5May31 Letter to editor, *Canadian Dimension* re: Warnock – “Imperialism & the Canadian Left”

1976: Re-publication 1970 LSA pamphlet/policy statement:
 “The Socialist Vanguard and the New Democratic Party”

3Mar1-4 **Fwd16 (Canadian Senate) Warns government against nationalism**
 8Aug1-3 *Fwd20 CLC Manifesto in perspective – danger or step forward? (LSA disputes)*
 8Aug6 **Fwd20 Is (Canadian) nationalism reactionary?**
 11Nov12 **Fwd23 Acid test for the the Left (LSA fails test)**

1977

7July1 **Fwd28 Cover – “Quebec and the Canada Crisis – for a Constituent Assembly and a New Canadian Constitution” (by R. Dowson)**
 7July1 **Fwd28 – Part 1: “The Canada Crisis puts Canada into question”**
 7July1 **Fwd28 – Part 2: “The social dynamics of the Quebec nationalist Movement”**
 7July1 **Fwd28 – Part 3: “For a Constituent Assembly and a New Canadian Constitution”**

1978

8Aug4 **Socialist Rights Defence Fund – Dowson launches \$500K suit against the Canadian Royal Mounted Police**
 9Sept30 **Notice of Hearings across Canada of Federal Commission of Enquiry**
 11Nov1 **Fwd#32 (3pp) The Corporate Elite and the US connection (book review)**
 11Nov1 **Fwd#34 Stop branch-plant closures!**

1979

2Feb1-6 #35 *Death of a US socialist (Joseph Hansen) (Dowson)*
 4Apr12 **Socialist Rights Defence Fund established to press charges against RCMP, press release re: police agent in LSO in 1970s with aim to blackmail gay comrade**
 6June8-4 **Laborers break, join CLC showdown struggle for Canadian union autonomy**
 6June8-5 **Dowson case heads to Supreme Court**
 12Dec1-05 **Fwd39 Left caucus launched at NDP convention**

1980

1980- **DowsonVsRCMP-1-cover “Dowson vs. the RCMP” book launch**
 1980- **DowsonVsRCMP-ad-1 List of supporters – International and national**
 1980- **DowsonVsRCMP-ad-2 List of supporters – Statement of Purpose**

1981

9-06-1a **Forward #46 “Inside Poland Today: the Program of Solidarity”**
 9-06-1h **Forward #46 “The importance of Solidarity to the Canadian struggle”**

1982

1Jan **Fwd#47 Canadian union autonomy issue in BC**

1983

6June **Fwd#49-5 Profane day of labor unity over Poland's Solidarnosc**

6June Fwd#49-14 Labor key factor in Canadian protest – Stop Show Trials!

1984

99 “Stop the Frameups in Poland!” (against the Solidarity trade union)

1985

1Jan23 Dowson letter to Editor, *Socialist Action* (US) re: Canadian autoworkers drive for autonomy
3Mar25-1 Dowson to *Socialist Action* (US) re legitimacy of Canadian union autonomy
3Mar25-2 *S.A.* prints Dowson letter with Nat Weinstein's reply (ex-SWP tendency)
12Dec99 Dowson article on the founding of large Canadian breakaway auto union (the Canadian Auto Workers)

1986

8Aug8 Dowson letter to Stouffmans re: journal *Labor Focus in Eastern Europe* on Poland

1973-SOCIALIST LEAGUE/FORWARD GROUP

eaz1973-04Apr United Tendency call (to LSA/LSO convention)
eaz1973-04Apr1 Letter J.D. to R.D. welcoming Tendency declaration
eaz1973-04Apr1 J.D. contribution to discussion in Vancouver Branch
eaz1973-04Apr9a Political Committee Platform (LSA/LSO Convention)
eaz1973-04Apr9b Platform of the RCT and the United Tendency
eaz1973-04Apr9d J.D. letter to Lomas, Dowson, etc. protesting factionalism
eaz1973-04Apr11-1 United Tendency platform
eaz1973-04Apr11-2 Draft Statement by UT to Vancouver Branch (from J.D.)
eaz1973-04Apr11 United Tendency presentation to Toronto Metro branch – G.D.
eaz1973-04Apr12 Letter J.D. to Lomas & UT on Vancouver Declaration
eaz2018 -W4- Mitch Podolak (Winnipeg) testimonial on Arnie Mintz)

2018

eaz2018 – Post-LSA obituary: Arnie Mintz, by Mitch Podolak (c.1973-1980)

(end of this archive)

Entire left is target of bill



Pierre Vallières, prominent writer and spokesman in Quebec nationalist movement, jailed once again, this time on frameup charge of "seditious conspiracy."

by Robert Dumont

NOVEMBER 15 — As parliament approaches third reading and final passage of the "temporary emergency powers act," designed to replace the War Measures Act, the Trudeau government chalks up another success in its campaign to create a permanent body of repressive legislation.

The new bill is substantially the same as the War Measures Act. It gives police the same power to arrest and search without warrant. Those arrested can still be held for up to 90 days without even a date for trial being set. The FLQ is still outlawed, and those convicted of membership — even membership before passage of the act — are still subject to five years' imprisonment.

The few modifications which distinguish this bill from the War Measures Act are of a very minor character, designed to confuse and undercut the opposition to the WMA while retaining the Act's essential features.

The immediate purpose of the bill is to provide the legal basis for the extensive frameup charges against the Montreal political prisoners arrested under the War Measures Act. This is the first time in many years that a political movement has been outlawed, making it possible to sentence persons to long jail terms on the sole basis of their views.

But the government's overriding pur-

pose in both the new legislation and the Quebec political trials is to take advantage of the favorable circumstances afforded by the FLQ kidnapping crisis to move against the entire Québécois nationalist movement. At the same time, it seeks to sustain the witch-hunt atmosphere which can enable it to introduce repressive laws and police measures for future use against the left throughout the country, and ultimately to strike against the broad labor movement.

No one can seriously believe that the Front de Libération du Québec is the prime target of this repressive legislation. The governments' stories of an "FLQ plot," an "apprehended insurrection," are today only a threadbare farce. Many of the close to 500 persons arrested under the War Measures Act report they were not even asked about the FLQ. The testimony furnished by FLQ suspects themselves reveals not a cohesive plot by a tightly-disciplined organization but at most the erratic actions of isolated handfuls of youths.

No, the real purpose of the repressive legislation is revealed by the way in which influential forces in the ruling class have been emboldened by it to move against dissenters in general.

In Vancouver a top military officer calls for banning the Vancouver Liberation Front. In Toronto, the Star demands similar action against Rising Up Angry, a small ultraleft group, and insinuates in various articles that Maoists and the Front de Libération Populaire should also be brought within the purview of the ban. The Star's "left" editorialists Steven Langdon and David Lewis Stein call on the Waffle group to clean its ranks of revolutionaries.

In Quebec, Justice Minister Choquette threatens to introduce a bill giving him special police powers on a permanent basis; he calls for compulsory identity cards with fingerprints and photos, and threatens direct censorship "if necessary." In Ottawa, Prime Minister Trudeau threatens to enlarge the powers of the RCMP, even to create a new force of intelligence spies for use against the left.

Farfetched rhetoric? Not at all. Canada has a long history of official attacks on democratic rights.

In 1919, to suppress the Winnipeg General Strike, Section 98 of the Criminal Code was rammed through parliament in record time; it was used to prosecute

strike leaders for sedition, to deport those who were foreign-born, and in later years, until its repeal in 1938, it was used to illegalize the Communist party.

The War Measures Act of 1939 was maintained in force until 1954, nine years after the war ended. Prof. James Eayrs, writing in the Toronto Star on November 10, records that "a secret order-in-council, passed on October 6, 1945 under the War Measures Act and kept in force under the Emergency Transitional Powers Act, allowed the minister of justice to hold without trial anyone suspected of acting in a manner prejudicial to the public safety." This ruling was used to arrest dozens of people during the Gouzenko spy scare.

Only a year and a half ago, the Royal Commission on Security recommended many similar measures, including closer restrictions on the views of civil servants, formation of a new security police force, and tighter surveillance of the "separatist" movement in Quebec. It smeared the Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière, the Quebec Trotskyist movement, as an "extremist" group which had "infiltrated" the "separatist" movement.

The new "emergency powers act" clearly falls within this pattern of repression. Justice Minister Turner's hysterical attack on the NDP as he introduced the bill in parliament is symptomatic; seldom was the government

more vulnerable to exposure by the opposition as a violator of basic democratic rights. The new bill reaffirms the War Measures Act's suspensions of civil liberties — at the very time when all the evidence is accumulating to show that the real target is the entire left and nationalist movement.

How completely indefensible, then, is the NDP's position on this new bill! The NDP voted for the principle of the bill on first and second readings.

It now appears the NDP will vote against it on third reading — not out of principle, however, but simply because its own paltry amendments were defeated.

The NDP's capitulation to the bill and its encouragement of the labor movement to endorse the legislation was a cruel blow to the campaign against the repression in Quebec. The party must reverse course immediately. It must denounce the frameup trials in Quebec. It must mobilize mass demonstrations and other forms of protest across the country against the repression.

Let there be no mistake. In banning the FLQ "or any successor group that advocates crime or force to bring about governmental change" the government has created an extremely dangerous precedent for the suppression of all dissent. The ultimate target of these repressive measures is nothing less than the labor movement, the New Democratic Party, the democratic rights of all Canadians.

CANADA - U.S. Relations

A Socialist Viewpoint

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LSA/LSO Statement

The following document was adopted by the 1968 convention of the League for Socialist Action/Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière. It deals with many of the questions now being discussed in the growing debate over U.S. control of the Canadian economy, culture and political life. Presenting as it does the revolutionary socialist position on U.S.-Canadian relations, we believe it is of particular relevance to the debate on "Canadian nationalism" within the New Democratic Party.

Relations between Canada and the United States have always been a dominant factor in Canadian politics. The British Conquest was largely motivated by the determination of the British Crown to build a military bastion on this side of the Atlantic from which it hoped to defeat the revolutionary New England states. Confederation was primarily carried through to overcome the immediate threat of the secession of the West to the United States or its conquest by the United States.

Today, along with the longstanding and now built-in deficit in trade relations, a decisive factor in Canada-U.S. relations has become the extent of U.S. capital investment in the Canadian economy. It is greater than the combined total of United States investment in all of Latin America and arrogates to itself political power appropriate to such a massive investment.

Coupled with this direct influence is the fact that U.S. capitalism, the last firm bulwark of world capitalism, has had thrust upon it and has seized the responsibility of sustaining capitalism as a system on an international scale - Canadian capitalism included.

Junior partner

The rising forces of the world socialist revolution, together with the declining position of all other capitalist powers and their weak position, both in absolute terms and relative to the U.S.

colossus - their deteriorating position in world trade, their inability to sustain an effective military force in the era of super-costly intercontinental ballistic missiles and nuclear devices to promote and defend their own particular interests-has forced them to become, if not completely subservient, reluctant, but nonetheless compliant tools, or at best junior partners of Wall Street and its imperialist interests. This is true in the case of the biggest and most solvent capitalist powers including those where U.S. investment plays little direct role in their economy.

The dynamic of U.S. capitalism and the world situation has overcome the economically artificial division of the northern sector of the American continent by an east to west border, not by violating this border or by Canada's absorption into the U.S. as the 51st state, but through trade and investment. In fact, it serves the interests of U.S. capitalism to maintain the myth of Canadian "sovereignty and independence."

The Canadian capitalist class is a powerful, tightly integrated, highly conscious and cohesive force, firmly in control of the state apparatus which it has constructed and shaped to serve its interests. The position of the Canadian capitalist class in control of the Canadian state apparatus is not challenged by U.S. capitalist interests.

But while in control of the state, the Canadian capitalist class is by no means in control of the Canadian economy - in fact it is less in control than the rulers of any other advanced capitalist country in the world.

Who rules Canada?

The facts of the colossal weight of U.S. capital investment are unchallengeable. Its scope, its myriad points of contact and influence, no doubt exert a decisive influence on Canadian political life (as well as on its social and cultural life) and Canada's role in the world conflict between capitalism and the forces of the international socialist revolution.

Does U.S. capital dominate the Canadian economy through control of what might be described as its strategic or decisive sectors? This question has been posed in an attempt to settle the somewhat formalistic question - Does the Canadian capitalist class actually rule Canada or does the U.S. capitalist class in effect own and rule Canada?

The strategic position of U.S. capital investment in relationship to what might be called strictly Canadian capital and their relative roles in the determination of Canadian affairs is not only difficult to assess but as we will see is largely irrelevant. If at other times there were conflicting antagonistic interests which caused the Canadian capitalist class to pursue or attempt to pursue policies that took it into real conflict with the U.S. ruling class, this is no longer the situation. It is now apparent that the Canadian capitalist class has arrived at a mutually agreeable relationship

with U.S. capital in their common exploitation of the work force of this country and its vast natural resources. The rationalization of the auto industry on a continental basis is taking place with particular and carefully worked out adjustments as to the overall impact on the Canadian-U.S. economy.

Special role

Far from seeking to conquer Canadian capitalism and to assimilate Canada into the United States, the American ruling class has sensitively developed a special role for Canada in their global imperialist strategy.

Washington has made special adjustments and concessions in order to keep the Canadian economy on an even keel. It has exempted U.S. investment in Canada from complying to special regulations that would have created difficulties for the Canadian economy. It has developed a working relationship which places the preservation of Canadian imperialist investments-many of which are undoubted fronts for U.S. imperialist interests-under the protective wing of the rapacious eagle. It has even worked out plans whereby it could hope to effectively quell revolutionary developments in Canada which might imperil U.S.-Canadian capitalist interests - Operation Camelot. (Footnote: Project Camelot was a Pentagon study of the revolutionary potential of certain Latin American countries, and included Quebec).

In return for these and other services, the Canadian bourgeoisie have defended all down the line the unpopular U.S. imperialist assault against the Vietnamese people, remained committed to the costly and completely militarily outmoded alliances of NATO and NORAD, and suffered the ignominy of U.S.-controlled corporations flagrantly violating Canadian law.

Thus in reality the relationship of the Canadian capitalist class vis-à-vis the U.S. capitalist class can best be described as that of partner - junior partner.

Radicalization

Ever-widening layers of the Canadian working class and petty bourgeoisie are developing an understanding and sympathy for the popular struggles developing across the globe - and they see Washington as the ruthless and bloody subverter of these struggles. An increasing number question the whole rationale of the cold war and its pacts and alliances such as NATO and NORAD-they are beginning to see the United States, and not the USSR and the workers states, as the aggressive military force that threatens mankind with a world war and possible nuclear destruction.

They see the U.S. as a violent society, a racist society, and a huckster society, reflected in the TV, radio programs, the books and the magazines that flood across the border. An increasing number

are developing a concern about the flagrant violation of the law by U.S.-based corporations in this country which leads to loss of trade and, of course, jobs for Canadian workers.

These above tendencies have been designated in some circles as nationalist-Canadian nationalism. The term is a misnomer, causing confusion rather than giving insight into this phenomenon, its dynamics and direction. More correctly, it should be designated as an elemental anti-imperialist sentiment - developing towards an anti-capitalist consciousness. Because it is essentially anti-imperialist, it finds no basis of support in any sector of the Canadian capitalist class and its spokesmen, who defend U.S. imperialism not only out of a natural affinity but with a clear understanding that their fate is inextricably tied to that of the U.S. ruling class.

Nationalism in advanced capitalist countries such as Canada has traditionally been a tool of the ruling class. In 1939 the banner of national unity was raised in order to gear the nation, specifically the working class, to sacrifice their lives in an imperialist world war. It is now being raised to mobilize English-speaking Canada against the legitimate struggle of the Québécois for their national rights. This bourgeois nationalism stands in the way of a class differentiation in society - in particular, the development of class consciousness amongst the workers and, where the workers are already organized along class lines, is designed to fracture them.

Apologists for U.S. rulers

What in common with this, has the phenomenon which we can see developing across the country over the question of Canada-U.S. relations?

Far from promoting this "nationalism" the Canadian ruling class, their parties and their spokesmen, stand firmly united against it. The bourgeoisie show such unshakeable and impervious unity in their acquiescence before U.S. imperialism and its domination over Canadian internal and external affairs that they expose themselves more and more as apologists and lickspittles for the U.S. ruling class. Thus we have Prime Minister Trudeau publicly declaring that Canada can only have the relationship to the U.S. that Poland has as a satellite to the USSR, and his various ministers stating that Canada must sell military supplies for use by the U.S. in its genocidal aggression in Vietnam or suffer the gravest economic dislocation - unemployment, etc., etc.

This brand of "nationalism," far from uniting the nation behind the bourgeoisie, far from smearing over class lines, is tending to unite the overwhelming majority of all other classes and sub-classes against the bourgeoisie. It is discrediting the traditional parties of the bourgeoisie as not representing any interest that could be said to be Canadian, as being in essence agents of another power - a foreign power, U.S. imperialism-whose role is increasingly becoming more clear and more hated and more feared.

In fact the traditional parties are discrediting not only themselves but the very state institutions that have been erected to cover over the real power structure. They are saying that these institutions in reality have no power that can prevail over the economic power of the U.S. ruling class.

In admitting that they are party to Canada's internal and external policy being made in Washington and Wall Street, the bourgeois parties are even performing the salutary task of undermining the parliamentary illusions of the Canadian people. They are underscoring the need for the working class to take the power and to lay down new economic foundations from which new social relations will form.

Demagogy

The bourgeoisie, of course, have not ignored this sentiment. Tory leader Diefenbaker gave it a high priority in his 1963 campaign. Although he never moved off the plain of nationalist demagogy in his high-powered bid to retain office, this lost him the confidence of every important sector of the bourgeoisie. The Liberals assigned Walter Gordon the task of encompassing this anti-imperialism, to which they gave a nationalist interpretation, within the Liberal Party, and even struck off a commission under Melville Watkins to investigate foreign investment. Both Gordon and the Watkins report have been pigeon-holed.

It was this "betrayal of Canadian independence" that prompted the editors of Canadian Dimension, an important journal of liberal petty bourgeois opinion with considerable influence in NDP intellectual circles, to issue an appeal in 1967. It urged that the "long-term" socialist solution be put on ice in order to realize the primary task of establishing Canadian independence through a new political formation that would be "politically non-partisan and would cut across racial, regional and class lines."

The response to Canadian Dimension's strictly nationalist appeal - reportedly, only four elderly Tories on the Prairies wrote in - is extremely revealing. Canadian Dimension's appeal broke up on the reality that the sentiments to which it attempted to appeal were not nationalist but essentially anti-imperialist and therefore class sentiments in terms of Canadian political life. Nor did the Communist Party get anywhere with its crudely anti-American supra-class appeal for the construction of an anti-monopoly peoples' coalition that would encompass in its ranks those elements of the bourgeoisie who would put the interests of the nation before profits. The same goes for the Progressive Workers Movement (Maoist). Its more radical-sounding appeal proved unable to raise the process even a millimeter higher onto the first stage of its projected national liberation struggle that would encompass sections of the bourgeoisie.

Radical sentiment

This anti-imperialist sentiment is an important fact of Canadian political and social life. To accept or pin the label nationalist on it is not only to designate it incorrectly. It leads to a dismissal, if not an opposition to it. On the contrary, we must recognize the essentially radical character of this anti-imperialist sentiment and develop it.

As U.S. imperialism is driven to ever more desperate, more openly vicious lengths in its role as defender of capitalism everywhere, opposition will continue to mount. In country after country this will sharpen working class opposition to the capitalist class who identify their fate with the fate of U.S. imperialism. The working class movements will increasingly bring to the fore demands for an independent policy of opposition to U.S. imperialism. The demand for an independent foreign policy for Canada-one of solidarity with the colonial peoples' freedom struggle and trade and aid with Cuba, China and the other workers states-will become more popular.

To recognize this anti-U.S. imperialism and develop it is to concede nothing at all to any form of anti-American chauvinism. On the contrary the most effective anti-imperialist activists here have found tremendous forces right inside the U.S. with which to identify and link up their struggle. The Canadian anti-war movement -has developed its most successful actions in solidarity with the much more massive anti-Vietnam war actions in the U.S. In the process it has deepened the understanding of the Canadian workers as to the character of their own bourgeoisie through its effective campaigns against the Canadian government's complicity with the U.S. in the Vietnam war.

Socialist position

It would be a tragic error to get hung up on broad abstract formulas and thus fail to make a correct assessment of the actual situation. The revolutionary socialists have successfully evaded this sectarian danger. We did not oppose the moves towards setting up Canadian unions separate, independent and apart from the so-called international unions on some abstract principle that we are internationalist and revolutionary and this was nationalist and hence reactionary. We considered that the support this had among militants was largely a reaction against the undemocratic manipulations of the trade union bureaucracy. We expressed our sympathy with this, and to those who would listen we cautioned that bureaucracy was endemic to reformist unions in our epoch and cannot be escaped merely by setting up an autonomous Canadian union (see Power and Dilemma of the Trade Unions in Workers' Vanguard, April, May and July 1967). We also attempted to make an overall evaluation of the situation and concluded that there was really no significant trend in this direction, that these forces were not viable and were generally composed of conservative elements.

Nor are we indifferent to the increasing economic penetration of US. capital into Canada, its increasing control of the economy and what goes with that - its determination of Canada's role in

world affairs. All the less can we be indifferent in that the Canadian working class is organized in a mass reformist party and we, aspiring to establish ourselves as its vanguard, are seriously projecting the possibility of an NDP government. The concept that U.S. penetration besides being an inevitable process, is a progressive phenomenon on the way to shaping up an integrated North American economy that would provide the foundation for a Socialist United States of America, is a hangover from pre-Leninist concepts of imperialism. Such "long-sightedness" would bring us down in the quick-sands immediately in front of us.

The Canadian economy is not only being grossly distorted, serving as a low wage sector of the U.S. economy, but it is an integral part of the latter's imperialist war machine directed at the rest of mankind which it threatens with total destruction.

Public ownership

We have advocated the public ownership of the basic means of production so that the economy can be planned and production geared to use. This is our general propaganda line - we have not worked out any list of priorities and in fact have presented this viewpoint in general around issues of the day. In response to the curtailments of railway services and attendant layoffs we have called for the public ownership of the CPR and its fusion with the CNR. It was a matter of indifference whether the CPR was or is now basically U.S.-owned. With the closure of the Dosco coal mines we urged their nationalization along with the Sydney steel mills, and their operation in an integrated Maritimes development plan.

The issue of economic domination is already being debated, and answers are being projected. There is the proposal to "open up to Canadian stockholders, buy into American corporations," the "buy Canada back" proposition; and the proposal to establish a supplementary public sector in order to develop a more specialized competitive economy. Since U.S. branch plants include many of the key industries, there can be no serious talk of public ownership and planning without nationalization of U.S. capital interests. Without making public ownership of U.S. interests a general demand, as U.S. interests violate Canadian law by refusing to accept orders from Cuba and China, etc., the question of their nationalization increasingly comes to the fore. This is not the separating out of "bad" capitalists from "good" capitalists for "punishment" by nationalization, but popularizing the whole concept from necessity. The specific action is posed in defensive terms, which is always a good stance for the revolutionary deed.

A clear understanding of the progressive implications of this rising anti-imperialist sentiment is necessary so that we can meet the new challenges that it will pose before us - particularly in so far as, thanks to our orientation to the New Democratic Party, we are today not restricted to academic educational work but are formulating policy for forces in a movement that is speaking to the masses. (end)

50 years of revolutionary socialism

by Ross Dowson

Fifty years ago this month, a group of revolutionaries from across Canada met in a barn just outside the town of Guelph in Ontario.

From there, under the banner of the Third International headed by Lenin and Trotsky, they launched the first serious effort to build a revolutionary party of the type necessary to make Canada socialist. The following spring they assumed the name Workers Party of Canada, and the next year, with the lapse of repressive legislation, adopted the name, Communist Party of Canada.

It was a confident and vigorous assembly. These men and women had come together from stormy and widely differing experiences — syndicalist, parliamentarist, opportunist, ultraleftist, sectarian, that were all part of the process of the growing radicalism of the post-World War I period — to the scientific socialist politics of Bolshevism. While they had yet to really assimilate and fuse Bolshevism with Canadian reality, they were supremely confident that they would do so.

Many of them, though young, were already leaders of the Canadian left. Some headed the Finnish, Ukrainian, Russian, Jewish cultural and political associations which had become broadly based and gone left under the impact of the pre-and post-World War I European crises.

Many of them were leading activists in the as-yet relatively small trade union movement of the day and or had been prominent in the Socialist Labor party, the Socialist party, the Social Democratic party, the One Big Union, and the Industrial Workers of the World. They brought with them the best forces out of these organizations which soon disintegrated or degenerated into hopeless sects.

And some of them were youth with no real experience in the class struggle but inspired with the possibilities of a socialist Canada and prepared to dedicate their lives to its realization.

The most highly respected figure in the party, Jack MacDonald, a pattern maker by trade, a recognized union leader and a popular speaker, was unanimously elected executive secretary. He held that post for the next crucial eight years. The acknowledged theoretician and the most able writer and orator was Maurice Spector, who in 1928 was the first Canadian to be elected to the executive committee of the Third International.

Among other leading personalities were Jack Kavanagh, prominent B.C. socialist, president of the 1919 congress of the B.C. Federation of Labor which organized the famed Western Labor Conference of TLC unions and launched the abortive One Big Union; Malcolm Bruce, unionist and publicist, Max Armstrong, Marxist

educator, Mike Buhay, William Moriarty, Florence Custance, and Tim Buck.

Eight years later, this youthful party that had been so full of promise, had undergone a profound degeneration, resisted unsuccessfully, first by Spector, and then by MacDonald. They were viciously and slanderously driven out of its ranks, along with anyone else who so much as wanted to give them a hearing.

The Communist party of Canada succumbed to the influence of Stalin who headed a parasitic caste that grew up on the impoverished, isolated first workers' state and which politically expropriated the Soviet masses and took over the Third International. Under Stalin's influence the parties of the Third International, from instruments directed towards the achievement of workers power in their own country, became pawns in the Kremlin's diplomatic maneuvers with the world capitalist powers.

The Communist party's subservience to the Kremlin and its betrayal of its original aims were rationalized with the so-called theory of "socialism in one country." According to this concept the USSR could advance to socialism of and by itself if only given respite from assault by world capitalism. The fundamental task of the Communist parties was not therefore to make the revolution in their own countries but to assure the peace, and thereby assure socialism in the USSR. Today from the same theory under the guise of "peaceful coexistence" comes the Canadian CP's advocacy of an anti-monopoly peoples coalition, with socialism as a distant, ultimate perspective to be achieved by the peaceful parliamentary path.

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Bankrupt program

Under the leadership of Tim Buck who became Stalin's chief acolyte, the Communist party veered from a period of extreme ultraleftism, which saw it characterize the CCF as social-fascist, to the class collaborationist politics of popular frontism, to open and shameless support of the capitalist Liberal party.

Despite its programmatic bankruptcy which doomed it as a revolutionary vanguard force, the CP did not by any means collapse. On the contrary it continued to grow. Thousands came to it — and went through it. While its cadre was corrupted and destroyed, its ranks expanded over the next two decades until in the 1940s it could claim some 15,000 members, leadership of several important unions, representatives in municipal and provincial government and a member in the federal House.

On the other hand, the group launched by Spector and MacDonald in 1934 as the

Workers party of Canada — one of the five original groups across the world that answered Leon Trotsky's call to commence anew the building of Leninist parties under the banner of the Fourth International — worked under indescribable difficulties. While it had a correct insight into the revolutionary dynamics of the times, it was cursed by a lack of forces and thereby prevented from effective intervention in an overall period of widening defeats of the revolution on a world scale. The group was harassed on all sides, slandered and vilified, under persistent and vicious attacks by the Stalinists which led to the political exhaustion of Spector and MacDonald's premature death in 1941, shortly after the murder of Trotsky at the hands of a Stalinist assassin. Nonetheless, thanks to its ideas, the movement survived. Eventually it even won to its side Max Armstrong, Malcolm Bruce, and by now in distant Australia, Jack Kavanagh.

The League for Socialist Action/Ligue

Socialiste Ouvrière and the Young Socialists/Ligue des Jeunes Socialistes are the direct lineal descendants of the movement that MacDonald and Spector were the leading initiators of 50 years ago, in 1921. How do they measure up to the Communist party which, while it veered wildly off course back in 1928, likewise claims to be the lineal descendant of the party that was launched at Guelph?

How are they meeting the new radicalization that is developing across the country — on the scope of the one that commenced in the early 1920s and laid the foundations for the early Communist party? And what are their perspectives? That is the essential theme of an article by William Stewart appearing in the Communist party's theoretical journal *Communist Viewpoint* of September-October 1970, although it carries the title "Ultra-Infantile-Anarchist Left in Canada."

How the Trotskyists can be characterized as ultraleft is at first by no means clear. Stewart describes them as "the oldest, most established and most subtle grouping," and as "the only one . . . with any organizational continuity," a group with "adaptability, arising from experience, which makes them the most dangerous current." Nor does he show by any of the criteria spelled out by Lenin, whom he quotes extensively, how the LSA/LSO and YS/LJS can be defined in any respect as ultraleftist. But unlike the "old days," when anything could be said about the Trotskyists with complete impunity, Stewart attempts to argue his case. Unfortunately for him, his evidence does not stand up before the slightest examination.

The Trotskyists "played a role" in the Canadian Union of Students, but not in splitting it, as Stewart charges on one page only to state on the next that "the 'new left' bears the major responsibility for that tragedy." The Trotskyists fought the ultralefts in an effort to make CUS an across-Canada instrument for student-faculty control of the universities. Is it perhaps the concept of student-faculty control of the universities that the CP considers ultraleft, but dares say so only by the most subtle implication?

Stewart has the Trotskyists advancing a policy of "confrontation with the state, the police," of projecting "revolutionary slogans" in the anti-Vietnam war movement. It is not possible to carry off such a charge with any one of the tens of thousands who are today involved in the antiwar movement. They know that it is the Trotskyists who have persistently



THERE IS NO PEACE

Only Socialism Can Save Mankind From Atomic Destruction in Another World War



WHO SPEAKS FOR SOCIALISM? CP's allegiance to Kremlin bureaucracy meant blind support of Stalin's wartime alliance with U.S. and British imperialism. Result was this infamous headline (left) in CP's Tribune Aug. 18, 1945, supporting A-bombing of Japanese people. Trotskyists took a different view (right), warning that imperialist powers would turn nuclear terror against Soviet workers state.

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CLASS STRUGGLE, NOT CLASS COLLABORATION. Under Stalin, Communist party degenerated into supporting capitalist parties like Liberals. Trotskyists have consistently supported principle of independent labor political action, as represented today by NDP. Above, author Ross Dowson, executive secretary of LSA LSO, during 1948 campaign for Toronto mayoralty as candidate of LSA predecessor, Revolutionary Workers Party.

fought against the ultralefts and against the CP for a single-issue, non-confrontationist, mass-oriented movement around two key demands — Withdraw U.S. troops now, and, End Canadian complicity in Vietnam. So, having said it, Stewart says that the Trotskyists had such a position... previously, at some unspecified time when it would be difficult to check on, and it is only "recently" that they have been conducting themselves along their present known line, "under great pressure."

In an attempt to explain this alleged shift, Stewart speculates that it "reflects two considerations." The first consideration will come as a surprise to campus activists who are witness to the rising influence of the Trotskyists at the universities, for Stewart says "they have been losing a considerable part of their influence on campus." The other consideration is puzzling — "they have been unable to find a meaningful base in the trade union movement," — until you read on to learn that "Trotskyite efforts in the trade union movement were for many years (despite his previous statement of their inability to find even a meaningful base — RD) predicated on the attempt to split the international unions" by supporting the breakaway Canadian national unions.

There is of course not the tiniest scrap of evidence to be found anywhere showing that the Trotskyists have supported Canadian national union tendencies — only lots of evidence to show that they have persistently counselled union militants against such a policy, urging them to stay and fight inside the CLC. But here too, having made the charge, Stewart takes it back on the next page: the Trotskyists, it seems, have once again "shifted their position to one of autonomy within the framework of the International unions."

It is a well-known fact that the Trotskyists have been persistent supporters of the New Democratic Party — although it is not so well known but it is a hard fact that the CP has consistently opposed the NDP as a block to its class collaborationist projection of an anti-monopoly peoples coalition, running candidates where it could against the NDP, particularly the more left-wing NDP candidates. The Trotskyists support the NDP as a mass break from capitalist politics and have vigorously fought to win it to a class-struggle program and a socialist perspective. This is well known, for the reformist right-wing of this labor party formation, in an apparent attempt to clear themselves of all radical taint in the eyes of respectable opinion, have conducted

several purges of the Trotskyists with great fanfare.

But things are not at all what they might seem, according to Stewart. "There is little doubt," we read, "that the right-wing leadership of the NDP gives covert, if not overt encouragement to their (the Trotskyists') activity. . ." And not just the right-wing — but the very enemy itself: "It is indispensable for them (the Trotskyists), and objectively, of course, also for monopoly, to strengthen their influence in the unions to provide a base for an attack from the 'left' which can impede the growing shift to the left and towards united parliamentary and extraparliamentary actions."

Having resorted to this ludicrous slander, it is but a small matter for Stewart to top off his attack on Trotskyism in the classical Stalinist style: "Their ideological outlook is anti-Soviet, anti-Communist, anti-unity and essentially counter-revolutionary."

It is only by characterizing the Trotskyists (who defend the Soviet Union as a workers state but are for the overthrow of the bureaucracy) as "anti-Soviet" and "anti-Communist" that Stewart manages to link them to the Maoists and the "new left" who see the Soviet Union as capitalist and even fascist, and therefore an integral part of his "ultra-infantile-anarchist left."

But how does Stewart see the entire wave of radicalization that is sweeping through whole new layers of the population?

The CP is aware of it. At one and the same time Stewart's article is both a recognition that the CP is to some considerable degree on the outside of this whole process looking in, and a challenge to the CP membership, now vastly reduced and going through continual crises, to get into it. He sees the "presence and growth" of what he calls the ultraleft "and the relative weakness of the Communist party, an implicit criticism of our stance, of our methods, of our revolutionary presence in the growing radical movements of the young people of this country in the factories and in the universities and high schools."

'Anti-Soviet'?

According to Stewart, the relative isolation of the CP from this new radicalization is the result of the latter's contamination by anti-Sovietism and anti-Communism. The "cold war is receding," he notes, "although not yet behind us by some considerable measure," he adds parenthetically. The revelation of the "Stalin cult," he notes, "shook the confidence of many people in socialism and has been used since as a major weapon in the arsenal of the anti-Communist camp." He worries that the "massive anti-Sovietism which has been instilled into children. . . has a pernicious influence."

But that is not at all how the Trotskyists



PIONEER COMMUNISTS. Early Communist party, before its Stalinist degeneration under Tim Buck, brought together revolutionary socialists behind the ideas of the victorious Russian revolution. Above, Maurice Spector,

read the new wave of radicalization that is sweeping ever new and widening layers into anti-status quo, anti-establishment, anti-capitalist actions across the country. It is by no means anti-Soviet and by no means anti-Communist. It is critically minded, it is humanist, it is profoundly democratic, and it is clearly revolutionary, increasingly open to all the liberatory concepts of socialism and its universal precepts. It sees the Communist party as the apologist for the Soviet bureaucracy that it truly is. It automatically tends to identify with the developing forces of socialist democracy in the Soviet areas. It tends to understand them as being not in anyway pro-capitalist — as the Polish bureaucracy and the Soviet bureaucracy themselves have been recently compelled to recognize. And it sees the CP as essentially reformist, which by every standard, with its peaceful-path-to-socialism concepts, it certainly is.

What has changed?

Throughout his article Stewart suggests time and time again that the Trotskyists have changed.

He states that the Trotskyists' "first open breakthrough in the postwar period was following the Cuban revolution." "They took advantage," he says, "of

certain inconsistencies in the line of the revolution and the existence of some sympathy for the theory of 'permanent revolution' among some Cuban leaders."

"After the outbreak of the Vietnam war they shifted their emphasis to that arena and have systematically," he says, "used the anti-war movement, since that time, to strengthen their ranks amongst campus and high school students."

Took advantage of? Used? Cuba — Vietnam?? Not at all! But rallied to the defence of the Cuban revolution and played an instrumental role in building the movement against the war on the Vietnamese people as is the responsibility of all forces that would even call themselves democratic not to speak of revolutionary and socialist.

If it wasn't for the Cuban revolution, and if it wasn't for the Vietnamese revolution, it is often said by CP supporters, you Trotskyists wouldn't be making the gains you are. But haven't the Cuban and Vietnamese struggles been key factors in the whole radicalization process? Might as well say, if it wasn't for the objective conditions that developed into a profoundly revolutionary situation in Russia in 1916-17 Lenin and his party wouldn't have done what they did.

It is not the Trotskyists who have changed. It is the whole world situation that has changed. We have entered into a

later the founder of Canadian Trotskyism, makes a point while (from left) William Moriarty, Buck and Jack MacDonald listen. Spector was editor of CP newspaper, MacDonald was party's general secretary.

new epoch of revolutionary struggles which in Canada is already radicalizing whole new layers of the population. The Trotskyists are bending every effort to meet the challenge of these new opportunities. We are attempting to deepen the struggle, to give it direction and a program — the program of the socialist revolution. We are out to clear out all the old rubbish that stands in the way of this development — including the Communist party whose crimes have caught up with it. The Trotskyists are out to train revolutionary cadres who will know how to participate fully in unfolding struggles and how to lead them forward to the conquest of political power and the structuring of a socialist Canada in a socialist world.

The Trotskyists haven't changed. We are what we were in June 1921 when we launched the Workers Party of Canada with Lenin, and commenced the process of building the revolutionary vanguard party of the Canadian revolution. We are what we were in 1934 with Trotsky when we commenced the task anew after Stalinism overwhelmed the precious first cadres. Today, 1971, we are entering into a new radicalization, and we are more than ever confident that we will develop the new cadre, that we will build the Canadian party of socialist revolution, which under the banner of the Fourth International will win!

On to Waterloo

by Kate Alderdice
Waterloo conference coordinator

MAY 15 — At least 500 people, the majority of them students and youth, are expected to converge on the University of Waterloo August 20 for the first cross-Canada Socialist Educational Conference, the conference organizing committee announced today.

Among the prominent socialist scholars who have already agreed to address the conference, the committee reported, are Evelyn Reed, American Marxist anthropologist, who will speak on the topic "Have Women Always Been the Second Sex?"; and George Novack, internationally known socialist theoretician, speaking on "The Meaning of Life — a Marxist Analysis."

As well, English-Canadian and Quebecois speakers will be giving lectures on the theory and strategy of the women's liberation movement, the struggle for an independent and socialist Quebec, the new youth radicalization and the student movement, the development of the revolutionary movement in Canada, and many other topics.

Speakers are also being invited from the European revolutionary movement.

There will be seminars, workshops, and informal discussions on dozens of different topics related to the Canadian revolution. There will be special evening sessions with well-known speakers, parties, and a cultural evening with some well-known

Canadian entertainers. And of course, time to go swimming, and just lie around in the sun.

Right now teams of unemployed students are heading out of the major cities to publicize the conference in towns and cities all across Canada. They'll be handing out brochures, putting up posters, slapping up conference stickers on telephone poles, in laundromats,



Evelyn Reed

anywhere that people go. Conference committees are now being set up in major cities; anyone who's interested in working for the conference is welcome to participate in them. They will publicize the conference in their local areas, raise money and initiate research projects.

Facilities are being booked at the University of Waterloo to accommodate 500 people for the week, talking, listening, sleeping, and eating. Cost of the five and a half days to each participant will be approximately \$30.

The conference is taking place on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of Canada. Inspired by the victory of the Russian revolution only four years earlier, the founding of the first revolutionary vanguard party was a great step forward for the working people of Canada; and one to which members of the Young Socialists and the League for Socialist Action, who are participating in the conference, trace their own revolutionary heritage. The actual founding convention took place in a barn at Guelph, quite close to Waterloo, and we are planning to visit the site and perhaps hold a celebration there.

This is the first in a regular series of columns on the Waterloo conference which will appear in *Labor Challenge* between now and August 20. Send in reports of what is being done in your area to publicize and participate in the conference.

LSA deplores split in Trotskyist ranks

by ART YOUNG

Organizational Secretary, LSA LSO

During the month of June, a split took place in the Canadian Trotskyist movement, when 25 members left the League for Socialist Action/ Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière and the Young Socialists/ Ligue des Jeunes Socialistes. The splitters include one member of the Central Committee of the LSA/ LSO, Bob Mills, and four members of the Executive Council of the YS/ LJS, including Sue Genge and Bob Woodworth of Peterborough.

The splitters had the same political views and gave the same reasons for quitting, although they left in four separate groups.

The League is the Canadian section of the Fourth International, world party of the socialist revolution founded by Leon Trotsky in 1938. The YS/ LJS is a revolutionary socialist youth organization in political solidarity with the League. It is therefore the sympathizing youth organization of the International in Canada. By leaving the section and its youth movement, the splitters have left the Fourth International.

Revolutionary socialists insist on the unity of the Trotskyist movement because of the nature of their task, and the measures required to achieve it. The aim is to gather the forces to build a revolutionary combat party, capable of leading the working class and its allies to victory in the struggle for power in this country. This demands the careful subordination of personal and factional considerations to the need to unite the revolutionary cadres in this historic task. The pressures of capitalism and the difficulties of the struggle tend to disperse and divide the revolutionary forces; revolutionaries strive consciously to unite them, and look on attacks on

the unity of the movement as a betrayal of the party-building task.

Trotskyism does not seek to unite with everyone. It broke with the Stalinist Third International when that organization capitulated to Hitler and so proved to be degenerate and incapable of correcting its errors. The revolutionary movement must also on occasion defend itself through disciplinary action against disloyal elements. And while it opposes unprincipled splits, it is equally opposed to unprincipled or unprepared unifications which would endanger the integrity of the revolutionary organization or its program.

A DEMOCRATIC DEBATE

The Trotskyist movement is founded on its historically established principles and program. This is the guarantee of the unity of the organization. When differences arise, as they do in any organization confronting the new tasks continually posed by the class struggle, they are resolved on the basis of fundamental concepts, through a process of democratic discussion and decision by the membership. While the party can commit errors, it is united by confidence in its capacity to correct them — a capacity based on the fact that errors will be revealed by the test of experience, and corrected through applying our basic program and principles. To rupture this party-building process through split is one of the gravest crimes against the Trotskyist movement.

The split in the Canadian Trotskyist movement began only six weeks after the convention of the section, which concluded a wide-ranging and rich internal discussion. The convention, originally scheduled for September 1972 was

twice postponed to facilitate clarification of disputed questions. The Revolutionary Communist Tendency, to which the splitters from the League belonged, was one of two minority groups that advanced positions in this debate counterposed to those of the majority of the Political Committee.

All contending points of view were discussed in the branches, and organized tendencies were invited to tour all branches to present their positions; each of the three contending platforms was put to a vote in the branches, and delegates were elected by proportional representation. In the convention itself, equal time was granted for the presentation of minority points of view, and convention rules were several times relaxed to ensure that every dissident point of view received adequate opportunity to be heard.

The discussion in the youth organization prior to and at its January convention was equally democratic. The views represented by the splitters received less than $\frac{1}{4}$ of the votes at the youth convention, and one-seventh at the convention of the League. In both conventions, the issues were clarified and the membership spoke with decisive voice. Both were models of internal democracy in a movement based on the Leninist norms of organization.

The splitters did not attempt to justify their break by alleging any lack of democracy. Rather they charged that the League had a policy of refusing to recruit persons who disagreed with many of its policies but whose views were similar to those of the minority within the organization. This "factional recruitment," they held, was practised against members of the Young Socialists and against the Rd Circle and Old Mole groupings.

The charge is utterly false. In

reality, the League has recruited a number of members of the YS holding minority views. Significantly, the majority of those who split while alleging "factional recruitment" had recently applied to join the League but they split before their applications could even be considered.

UNITY ATTEMPT FAILS

The League has been involved in an attempt to achieve closer relations and eventual unity with two small groups, the Old Mole and Red Circle, for over half a year. The Red Circle originates in the left wing of the NDP. In the process of the struggle against the reformist NDP bureaucracy and the nationalist leadership of the Waffle, this group came to revolutionary socialist positions. Considering themselves supporters of the Fourth International, they approached the League with a proposal for fusion. The League responded by opening discussions with the group as a whole in order to determine their views. It soon became apparent that there were wide disagreements between the two organizations over questions of vital importance.

The Old Mole for its part developed at the University of Toronto, as a student group in opposition to other campus groups including the U of T Young Socialists. Despite the fact that its positions had evolved some distance towards revolutionary socialism, wide disagreements also separated it from the League and the YS.

But the existence of such wide differences did not in itself mean that unity was impossible. Their real import could only be tested in life, through attempts to work together. The League sought to work with the Old Mole and Red Circle in common

actions and campaigns, in the hope that this would lead to a rapprochement and lay the basis for an eventual unification. But the result was just the opposite. As the Old Mole and Red Circle moved closer to each other, they moved further and further away from the League. No common work materialized. Instead, different political lines were sharply counterposed in virtually every major field of activity.

This was the decisive test.

If the League and these groups could not find a single area in which they could do revolutionary work together what hope was there that they would prove able to work together inside a common democratic-centralist organization active in many different fields? Clearly there was no basis for immediate unification.

The League suggested rather to both groups that we pursue more actively their attempts to collaborate wherever possible. Unfortunately, these attempts have been no more successful than in the past.

RMG SUPPORTS SPLIT

On May 25, the Old Mole and Red Circle announced their fusion, becoming the Revolutionary Marxist Group. Soon after, the split began in the Trotskyist movement, with the splitters declaring that they were leaving in order to build the RMG. The RMG Political Committee endorsed their split. In a letter to the LSA/ LSO dated June 25, their PC states its view that "it is not the comrades who resigned (from the League and the YS/ LJS) whose actions are damaging to the unity of the world Trotskyist movement." The PC suggests that the splits were provoked by the leaderships of the YS/ LJS and

LSA/ LSO, repeating the charges levelled by the splitters. In addition, the RMG states that it is "at present engaged in a process of recruitment discussions with them," indicating that their recruitment to the RMG is probable.

This attitude on the part of the RMG to those who have just struck a blow against the Canadian Trotskyist movement, placing themselves outside and in opposition to it, is a hostile act against the LSA/ LSO. While the League has dealt with the Old Mole and Red Circle as organized groups, making no attempt to recruit individual members from them, these organizations, now fused in the RMG, have sponsored a split in the Trotskyist movement. Far from promoting the "unity" of the Trotskyist movement, they have conducted a raid on the Canadian section of the Fourth International and its youth organization.

The League for its part regrets these developments which pose a new obstacle to the achievement of unity of revolutionary socialist forces in Canada. It will nevertheless continue to seek areas in which the LSA/ LSO and the RMG can collaborate. Attempts must be made to reverse the process of growing division between the groups. At the same time, the political discussions between the organizations cannot remain centered on small meetings between leaders of the two groups. They must proceed in such a way as to permit the participation of the members of both organizations as well as others on the left.

In its coming issues Labor Challenge will publish a number of articles examining in a systematic fashion the differences between the RMG and the Canadian Trotskyist movement.

Origins of Canadian Trotskyism

Lotta Dempsey, a columnist for the *Toronto Star*, told her readers in mid-August that if they "miss student protesters and their slogan placards here next weekend" one reason was "the Socialist Educational Conference at the University of Waterloo, where 400 are expected."

Among the speakers at the conference, which in fact was attended by 450, was Ross Dowson, executive secretary of the League for Socialist Action-Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière, who addressed the gathering on its major theme — *Fifty Years of Revolutionary Socialism, 1921-1971*. We reprint below major excerpts from his address.

What is all this about 50 years of revolutionary socialism — the display in the foyer, with its yellowing group-photo of a Canadian Labour Party convention in 1926, from which blow-ups have been extracted?

What's all this got to do with this gathering, not only a couple of generations removed but one so obviously "with it," one that is so completely "clued in" on all the ongoing actions of these days?

Besides, you might well ask, aren't we only needlessly complicating things when we attempt to relate ourselves to this event back in 1921 (the founding of the Communist party) when the Communist Party of Canada also relates itself to this same event and we will therefore have to extricate ourselves from all kinds of difficulties — for instance, Stalinism?

It seems to me that it is a matter of great importance — and if there had ever been any doubt in my mind about the correctness of today's revolutionists tying in with that band of revolutionists who assembled near here back in 1921, the trip up to Waterloo from Toronto clarified it for me.

We came up from Toronto a few days ago in a big hurry to attend the Saturday morning session — with a map — an



Ross Dowson

Ontario road map. Good enough to get us into the area. But we did not have a good navigator in the bucket seat. And it soon became obvious to us — that you can't get to where you want to go — if you don't know where you are! And you cannot possibly know where you are at — unless you know where you are coming from!

That assembly of men and women who gathered just outside Guelph 50 years ago are our beginning — even though not one of us was there.

That is not to deny that there is a whole series of events and personalities in the stormy history of the Canadian people which we firmly identify with — William Lyon Mackenzie, Louis-Joseph Papineau, the Indian Chief Poundmaker. But we live in the epoch of the world socialist revolution, the epoch of the transition from capitalism to socialism — and we have set ourselves the task as revolutionists to forge the instrument that will not only make that transition easier, but possible.

That is why we cannot start from any

other point. From, say, the founding of the CCF or the NDP, which are not part of the revolutionary socialist tradition but are reformist. Nor even from the organization of the International Left Opposition...

We commenced with the coming together of all the best of a previous period of Canadian radicalization, who, having grasped the great significance of the first breakthrough that took place in Russia in 1917, founded in 1921 what was shortly to become known as the Communist Party of Canada. That is where our idea commenced. It is from there that our ideology, which we have tested and expanded, first took root in Canadian soil.

It is the good fortune of revolutionists here in Canada that not only can they trace out the origin and the development of their ideology, but that there is a direct continuity in the physical composition of the revolutionary cadre. It was not Tim Buck who was the founder of the Communist Party of Canada. He was only one of the participants and, as subsequent events showed, got in there through a misunderstanding.

The first general secretary was Jack MacDonald who held that post in the revolutionary days, until he was expelled in 1929. And the chairman of that party was Maurice Spector, its leading theoretician and publicist, who was expelled in 1928.

William Rodney in his valuably researched work *Soldiers of the International* — a history of the Communist Party from 1919 to 1929, has the work of that founding congress end in disarray, with the expulsion of Jack MacDonald in 1929. He accurately says that MacDonald's expulsion "marked the end of an era in the history of the Communist Party of Canada." But Rodney is wrong when, after relating how MacDonald joined Spector, he says their efforts ended in failure.

We here today are the fruits of their efforts, and I think that any impartial



Jack MacDonald

observer would say that Rodney's sentence is not only premature, it is dead wrong.

Tim Buck, the chief acolyte in Canada of Stalin and his heirs, has been compelled by Rodney's book to rewrite all his previous "histories" of the Communist Party of Canada.

Late last fall his book *Lenin and Canada* appeared. Of the some 91 pages of new material, 35 pages, or more than one-third, deal with what he calls "from political inexperience to the struggle for Leninism." When Buck says Leninism, he of course really means Stalinism. For Buck, as the CPC has crashed from one rock to another, disgorging leader after leader until he alone remains, is an unregenerate Stalinist. When Buck writes about the struggle to "Bolshevize" the cadre of the youthful CPC it soon becomes obvious that he means the struggle to Stalinize it. This was indeed a difficult process for there was one thing that

→ to page 2

marked out these men and women from the rest of their generation. They were genuine revolutionists.

In fact, they were Trotskyists.

Maurice Spector in the statement that he hurriedly submitted to the Political Committee of the CPC on November 6, 1928, denied the existence of this thing called Trotskyism. He was challenged to endorse the expulsion of three of his U.S. co-thinkers, including James P. Cannon from the Workers Party of America — and to agree to carry an aggressive campaign against the platform of the Opposition led by Trotsky in the CPSU.

He assured the political committee that "I am prepared to wage an aggressive campaign for Leninism" and went on to explain that Trotskyism as distinct from Leninism is a myth designed to obscure the real issues — which are the destruction of the Leninist party, its democratic centralist structure and the leninist doctrine — with the theory of "socialism in one country" today known as peaceful co-existence.

One of these early revolutionists, William Moriarty, attended the plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, where Trotsky and the Left Opposition were under vicious attack. Moriarty wired the Canadian party leadership for instructions as to how he should vote on the charge that Trotskyism is anti-Leninist and harmful to the cause of socialism.

MacDonald polled the party leadership and sent the following telegram to the ECCI and Moriarty: "The Executive Committee is not convinced on the basis of the evidence obtained that the Comintern is actually menaced and confronted with a system constituting Trotskyism ... that he (Trotsky) contemplates revision of Leninism ..."

Not even the censure of the authoritative Executive Committee of the Communist International was sufficient to cause the leadership of the youthful CP of Canada to buckle. MacDonald's report to the fourth national convention of the party, which as



Maurice Spector

Buck says, placed "the Canadian party squarely in Trotsky's camp," was adopted with only seven votes in opposition. Subsequently Buck went as a delegate to the 7th plenum of the ECCI where the campaign to drive Trotsky out of the CPSU and quash the Bolshevik opposition to Stalinism which he led, was at its height. Buck recalls how he returned to Canada with Mathew Popovitch "with the confident feeling that now the shoe was on the other foot... the Political Bureau and The Worker, we thought, will have to either accept or reject the line to which we have committed our party."

Over Spector's opposition, the Political Bureau adopted Buck's pro-Stalin report. Spector announced his resignation from the bureau and from the office as editor of the party press and chairman of the party. The meeting refused to accept his resignations and reaffirmed him in the posts. Buck was compelled to withdraw his motion that Spector should be required to change his vote on the resolution.

Subsequently Spector and MacDonald were elected to represent the CPC at the

6th World Congress of the Communist International, and Spector, on the recommendation of the CPC, was elected as a member of the Executive Committee of the Comintern. It was at that assembly of the Communist International that Spector, with James P. Cannon of the American party, came across Trotsky's Criticism of the Draft Program of the Communist International.

With this clarification in hand they decided to launch the world-wide struggle in support of Trotsky and against Stalin and his policies which transformed the Communist parties of the world from instruments for the socialist revolution in their own countries into border guards of the USSR and pawns in the diplomatic maneuvers of the Soviet bureaucracy.

What kind of men and women were they who gathered in a barn outside Guelph 50 years ago and issued forth to build the communist movement in Canada? They came out of the first important wave of radicalization that arose prior to World War I, peaked in the 1919 Winnipeg General Strike, and was dissipated in the economic boom of the '20s.

It was neither the character of the chief contestants, MacDonald-Spector versus Buck, or the merits of their respective programs, that decided the outcome of the struggle in the '30s. It was the prestige and authority of the Soviet Union, manipulated by the bureaucratic, parasitic caste that grew up on it — and the ebb of the radicalization processes in this country that paved the way for the Stalinization of the thin layer of vanguard elements who had come to the early Communist Party — and on the other hand assured the isolation of MacDonald and Spector and their supporters who had begun anew the struggle to build the Workers Party of Canada.

Buck won the essential cadre of the party which in the next wave of radicalization, with the great crash of 1929 and the rise of the CIO, carried the CP forward and thousands into its ranks. It grew despite its flagrant violation of the

most elementary principles of class struggle politics. Its fatal flaw, its programmatic bankruptcy, has only become clear to many people with the crisis of its masters in the Kremlin, hit by the mounting struggle for socialist democracy, the rising struggle of the masses in the colonial world and in key sectors of the advanced capitalist world, which has exposed the counter-revolutionary character of the theory of peaceful co-existence — and, in this country, the rise of a mass labor party, the NDP.

We are of the same breed as the men and women who gathered together in Guelph in 1921... By all counts we stand in a better position than they did. Canada is now a highly urban society. The overwhelming majority are wage laborers. They are highly organized both on the union and political plane. And we are now witnessing a new wave of radicalization which is deeper and wider than any previous radicalization that we have known before, and there is no end in sight...

Today has significantly been called the age of permanent revolution. That is the age of the Fourth International and the coming of age of the League for Socialist Action-Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière.

New Brunswick events spark debate

What role for socialists in NDP?

by P. Kent

The article "Walkout breaks up N.B. NDP convention" was written on the eve of the Oct. 16 Fredericton meeting which culminated in a split of the New Brunswick NDP.

It was addressed to those New Brunswick radicals who identify with the Waffle — not to the NDP liberal-reformist leadership. We did not hope to influence latter in their course but rather to help create circumstances which would make it more difficult for them to achieve their purpose, and to aid the left. It was fraternal advice from an activist in the League for Socialist Action-Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière — an attempt to exchange experiences between socialists.

Its primary aim was to convince those

who have been carrying on the fight for a socialist policy in the New Brunswick NDP to cool things down, insofar as they were able, and not "give the right wing leadership a pretext for disbanding the party — but rather to create a milieu within the party that permits the left to advance its viewpoint."

We urged the left to take a positive attitude of identity to the New Brunswick NDP which is still in its infancy, to help "build it for the day when the left can truly come to grips with the reformist leadership. . . To declare its readiness to collaborate with even the existing leadership of the trade union movement in building a party rooted in the organized labor movement."

Our correspondent P.B. disagrees: "This is definitely not the task facing revolutionaries and leftists in the party — this is in no way the crucial consideration."

It would seem from their decision to go ahead with the Fredericton meeting as a convention, and their election of officers, including the mock defeat of the former party leader in absentia, that the leadership of the left wing shared P.B.'s opinion. For in effect, on Oct. 16 they

consummated a split.

P.B. projects the need to decisively terminate the NDP experience in New Brunswick now, and to build a mass working class party with a revolutionary leadership, outside the NDP, and against it, now, in New Brunswick.

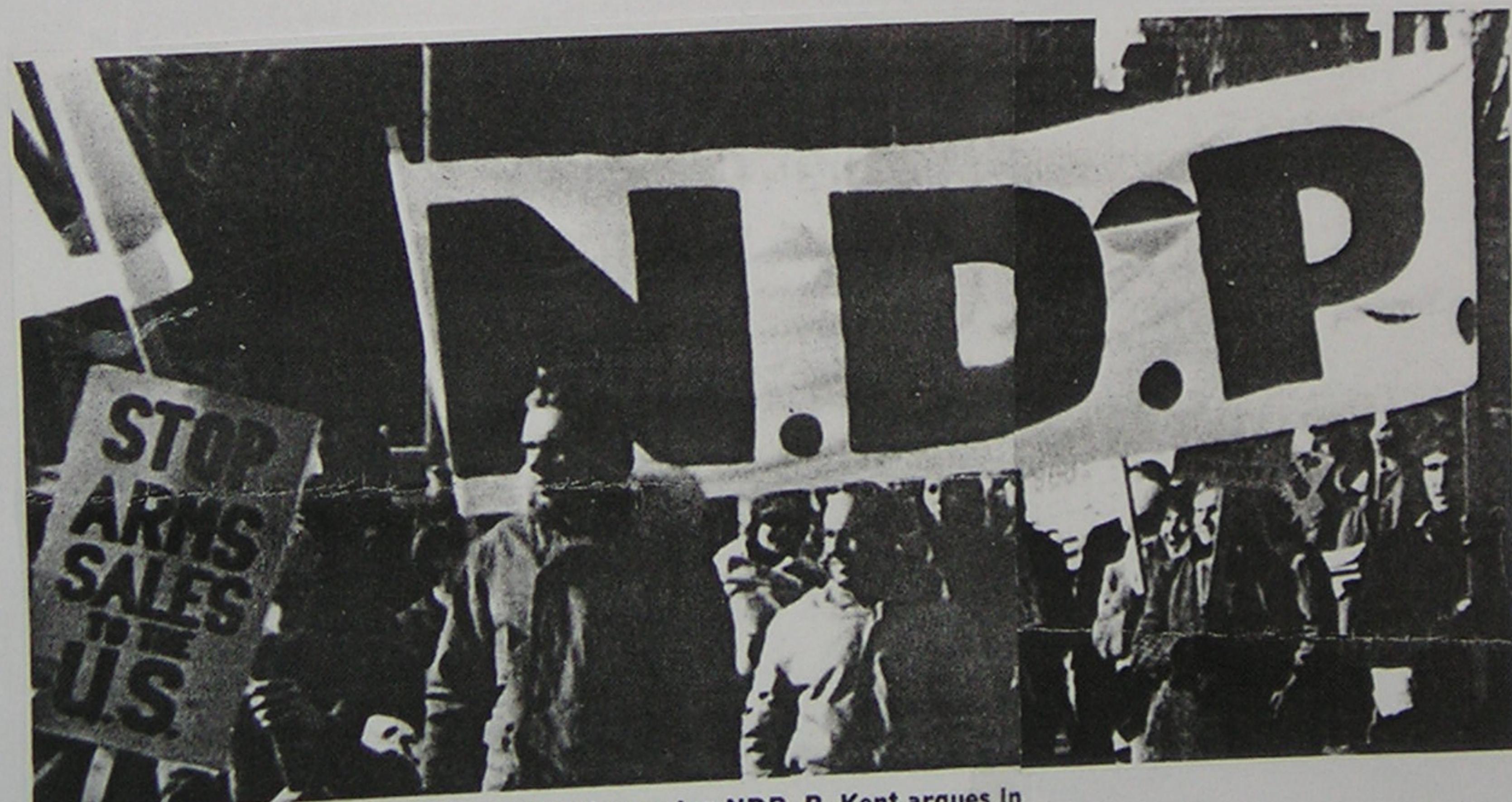
The LSA-LSO shares the revolutionary aspirations expressed by P.B. But while to come to an understanding of the need (as we would express it) to build a mass revolutionary vanguard party, is a colossal leap in consciousness, it is still far from its realization.

By carrying through the struggle to the present split, the left wing has not by any means cleared its liberal-reformist NDP and trade union opponents from the arena.

P.B. is of course well aware of the strength of the NDP in Ontario and B.C., and the fact that it is in office in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. However, New Brunswick, where the NDP is quite weak, is an exception, P.B. suggests.

It is difficult not to think, though, that the weakness of the NDP is directly related to the low level of class consciousness and class organization in New Brunswick. Furthermore, for New Brunswick to be an exception is to count

→ to page



REVOLUTIONARY LEFT can't be built by bypassing NDP, P. Kent argues in reply to a reader. NDP activists must link the party, as an important political arena for radicalizing workers, with all ongoing mass movements for social change.

heavily on the NDP top brass not intervening with the prestige and resources at its disposal in support of the right wing. It is to count heavily on the federal leadership, (who even as a serious parliamentary force must accumulate forces in New Brunswick) deciding to let things take their course there for some time.

It may well be that the left has succeeded in giving the majority of party activists, still quite modest in number and inexperienced, some rudimentary concepts of socialism. But it was through the NDP connection that these activists largely students and other petty bourgeois types, had the possibility of making contact with workers moving in the direction of anticapitalist struggle. Through this schism and the confusion that must inevitably ensue this linkage has been badly disrupted.

Even should the federal NDP and the New Brunswick reformists leave the arena relatively clear to the left — what perspective is there for a formation with a program such as the Manifesto around which it has coalesced?

It is obvious from its ultraleft and utterly naive character that this program does not develop out of any real experience, either in New Brunswick, Canada or the world. It is a literary work revealing the essentially petty-bourgeois student character of this formation. For all its radical sounds it is essentially reformist.

A revolutionary leadership capable of building a mass working class party cannot be built without a developed program. It cannot be built in one province. It cannot be built without a Canada-wide and world outlook.

The new formation which has been launched is a very rudimentary vessel — without any substantial program and without a leadership that has any real common experience and understanding. It is without charts and without the necessary skilled elements around which to build a crew.

The former NDP left, if it ever heard it, has rejected the LSA-LSO's advice. It would appear that such comrades as P.B. misunderstand it, possibly thinking that we hold to some concept of stages about the political development of the Canadian working class. We see the NDP as a tremendous political fact completely outside of our will that cannot be got around — even in New Brunswick. We are convinced that life will show that. Be that as it may, the LSA-LSO is the bearer of 50 years' experience in this country in building the revolutionary vanguard, firmly based on a world program of socialist revolution embodied in the Fourth International founded by Trotsky.

It is our opinion that the forces that have come this far in New Brunswick are now confronted with the gravest danger of adventurism and demoralization. It is important that it be possible for joint discussions to take place on the understanding we share, the need to build a revolutionary party.

→ see page 3

Reader says we're wrong on the NDP

Dear Comrades:

As a long-time reader of Labor Challenge and as a revolutionist who supports the Waffle movement in the NDP, I was strongly disturbed by the article entitled "Walkout Breaks Up New Brunswick NDP convention" by P. Kent in the Oct. 11 issue of your paper.

For years Labor Challenge and revolutionaries working in the NDP have rallied around the slogan "Win the NDP to Socialism." Comrade Kent states that the task facing socialists in the New Brunswick party is to "create a milieu within the party that permits the left to advance its viewpoint." This is definitely not the task facing revolutionaries and leftists in the party. In all provincial sections of the party the Waffle has been able to put forth its view and has succeeded in winning large sections of the party to its views. The author of the article should recall the last Ontario NDP convention where the Waffle was able to win more than 40 percent of the delegates to its major positions.

In New Brunswick where the NDP is not yet a labor party, the Waffle has succeeded in winning a majority of the party activists to a socialist program. The task that faces revolutionaries there is to lead these activists beyond a socialist program (i.e. immediate nationalization). Inside the party we must educate and train the activists to lead the struggles of the workers and all oppressed groups in society which are surely coming in New Brunswick. The party itself must develop a program which can lead the workers toward implementing the program of the party. By leading the party activists correctly, revolutionaries can win large numbers of them to the ranks of revolutionary socialism.

The crucial consideration can in no way be "to preserve the NDP, to maintain it, and build it for the day when the left can truly come to grips with the reformist leadership" as Comrade Kent states. The task of building a mass working-class party is of course crucial but such a party does not by definition have to have a reformist leadership. In fact, the task facing the radical and revolutionary sectors of the New Brunswick party is to develop it into a tool of the working class by leading all oppressed groups and the working class forward. By developing a strategy of working in the potentially mass anticapitalist movements and in the embryonic trade unions, revolutionaries can create the leadership necessary to lead the socialist revolution when the radicalization of the working class begins in the Atlantic Region.

Yours for socialism,

P.B.
Toronto, Ont.

Split in New Brunswick NDP

The fledgling New Brunswick New Democratic Party is staggering from crisis to crisis. In effect, it is now split in two.

The crisis broke out into the open at the party's annual convention held in St. John Sept. 25 with the walkout of key trade union leaders when the delegates adopted with a one-vote margin a manifesto proposed by a left-wing formation. Other elements later joined the walkout so that there was no longer a quorum.

The left-wing formation has been designated as Waffle, but to date no leading spokesperson of this broad NDP left wing has commented on the situation. The manifesto which won 41 votes, reflecting a certain radicalization in the area, largely at this time confined to student youth, contains many excellent ideas. However, as a whole it does not develop out of any substantial experience of any important sector of the working people of the province.

Following the blowup of the convention a provincial council meeting was held in which the delegates who had walked out participated. The council decided to continue the convention in Fredericton on Oct. 16. Party leader Albert Richardson charged that there were irregularities in

the convention and appealed to the federal leadership of the NDP to intervene. Richardson and other executive members held a meeting over the Thanksgiving weekend which decided to postpone the convention.

On Oct. 16, Patrick Callaghan, president of the party and the leading spokesman of the left, called a meeting in Fredericton of the provincial council which was attended by some 10 persons and adjourned to participate in what they declared to be the official convention taking place that afternoon. This meeting was followed by a provincial council meeting called by party leader Richardson. It was attended by some 50 persons, including apparently some of those who had attended the Callaghan meeting.

Richardson's report that a petition had been sent to the federal leadership to render a decision on the procedure of the St. John convention aroused considerable protest, with J. Baxter of Fredericton stating that the federal leadership had no right to intervene in the affairs of the provincial section.

Following a sharp debate, the council, by a vote of 29 to 10, postponed the convention and decided to call a special one—five weeks later in Chatham on Nov. 27.

According to John Boyle of Sackville the majority of the provincial executive and all the provincial officers, with the exception of the president and the treasurer, agreed to the postponement of the convention.

Nevertheless, Callaghan and his supporters convened what they designated as the convention. It adjourned after five and a half hours of decisions including election of officers. Richardson was nominated party leader in absentia and defeated by Callaghan by a vote of 63 to 2.

Federal NDP secretary Clifford Scotton has since told the press that in his opinion the Fredericton convention has no validity and that the NDP federal council will be discussing the situation at its meeting in Ottawa Nov. 12-14.

To date the Callaghan forces have not made known whether they will continue to attempt to establish the legitimacy of the St. John and now the Fredericton meetings as the official convention of the New Brunswick NDP. Or whether now, faced with Richardson and his trade union supporters being backed by the NDP federal party leadership, they will in effect try to establish a new political formation in the province of New Brunswick.

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FINDING OF THE POLITICAL COMMITTEE

At its October 17 meeting the political committee of the League for Socialist Action/La Ligue Socialiste Ouvriere had a lengthy discussion based on the tapes of the hearings held in both Halifax and Fredericton ---- the October 9, 10, 11 weekend with comrades Walter D [redacted], Will O [redacted] and Terence H [redacted] and supplementary observations by comrades Dowson and L [redacted] who conducted the hearings. Following the discussion it unanimously passed a motion that comrades [redacted] are guilty as charged of gross disloyalty to the Canadian section of the Fourth International.

While it decided to lift the suspensions that it brought into play on a temporary and emergency basis on August 31, and to restore the four comrades to full rights of membership, at the same time it unanimously passed a motion of censure against them for acts of gross disloyalty.

Underpinning their acts of disloyalty was their formation of a hidden or undeclared tendency behind the back of the movement and hostile to its democratically elected leadership and the positions adopted by the movement at its convention and the plenary session of the CC which the leadership is committed to uphold and apply.

This led all four comrades to flagrantly violate the constitution of the LSA-LSO, in particular Article 6 Section 4.

It also led the Fredericton comrades to pursue, for some months, behind the back of the movement, a line with regards to the NDP which is clearly and flagrantly in violation of the declared line of the movement. While it is not yet possible to assess the effect of this line in New Brunswick it is clear that there were grave dangers that it would hopelessly compromise our years of work in the NDP across Canada -- this danger, despite remedial actions taken by the leadership of the League, may by no means be yet overcome.

The evidence that led to the laying of the charge is contained on pages 2, 3, and the top of page 4 of the attached document, "Report on the Maritimes suspensions". Supplementary evidence was presented by the executive secretary to the political committee as outlined in other sections of the "Report...".

Significance of the
So that there should be no confusion with regards to the evidence about the extension of the Atlantic Conference and the Fredericton mini-conference, we would point out that while our movement seeks to be a homogeneous force, we consider it is inevitable that differences will develop within our ranks.

It is only natural that comrades who feel they have a common evaluation of certain problems and questions before the movement should meet together to exchange experiences and ideas and even take decisions that they think will enable them to more effectively bring their views to the attention of the whole movement. At times some think it necessary to form a tendency to attempt to change the policy of the movement and even bring the leadership into harmony with the changed policies.

But the long organizational experience of our movement that spans some seventy years of struggle to build Bolshevik parties, demonstrates to us that it is essential that differences within the movement should not be exaggerated. It is also essential for the health of the movement that they should be expressed frankly and openly and not behind the back of the movement, thereby preventing the collective experience of the movement from coming into play. If differences are confined in their development to a fringe of the movement or a sector of the movement, they tend to give comrades involved a one-sided view, lining them up quickly and prejudicing their thinking before they have heard an open party debate, and warping their capacity for objective judgment.

Comrades who think they have differences should conduct themselves in a responsible and disciplined manner so as to safeguard the unity of the movement and educate the membership in principled politics.

The evidence of Gordon S. and supplementary information learned through the hearings revealed that the 4 LSA/LSOers utilizing their prestige and authority as leaders of the Fredericton and Halifax youth locals formed a tendency which they hid behind the backs of the rest of the movement and which they developed in such a way as to make it hostile to it. What flowed out of this policy pursued by the four, who should have known better, confirmed, in a negative way, the experiences of those who have gone before us. Now that it has been brought out into the open by the intervention of the political committee it is to be hoped that not only the comrades directly involved but the entire movement will learn from it.

The Control Commission

The charge of gross disloyalty was only laid on September 30 -- a full month after the emergency and temporary acts of suspension, and only following the report of the control commission of its inability to proceed as asked by the PC and empowered by the LSA/LSO constitution -- Article VI - Sections 1-4.

The Halifax comrades refused to make any response of any kind with regards to the informations they were confronted with by the control commission -- but rather presented a whole series of counter charges and a whole series of demands on the commission. In the case of Fredericton the control commission was met with absolute silence.

In the course of the investigation comrade O. and comrade D. attempted to defend their refusal to answer to the control commission. They argued that the control commission's request for information was in essence a demand that they give a "yes or no" answer which they pedantically informed L. Dowson is completely undialectical. Comrade O. gave the impression that he had been unclear as to what was involved, although the control commission quite clearly explained the situation in several communications.

Comrades J. and W. , in correspondence that arrived after the charge had been laid, went so far as to actually challenge the integrity of the control commission. Although they gave no grounds for doing so, the implication was that this body, struck off by the convention as an institution uniquely removed from internal party conflicts and thereby uniquely qualified to have the complete trust of

every comrade, was in fact corrupt, was biased, and to such an extent ~~that~~ that it couldn't be considered to be unbiased as the body which actually enforced the suspensions - the political committee. They demanded that the PC itself intervene to "ensure an objective investigation".

While on one hand the Halifax comrades were demanding a rapid settlement of the matter because they claimed, contrary to the terms of the suspensions as outlined by the PC, the suspensions blocked them from all political activity. Comrade H-S replied to our enquiry as to why he refused to respond to the control commissions correspondence -- with the jesuitical argument that he had by no means refused. None of the demands of the control commission mentioned any time limit, he said.

It is clear beyond any doubt whatsoever that all four comrades violated the constitution of our movement, in particular Article 6 Section 4 which clearly states that "it shall be obligatory on every member of the league to furnish the control commission or its authorized representatives with any information they may require". They did so fully conscious of the ~~dangerous~~ ^{dangerous} nature of their act. They thereby challenged the essential integrity of our movement. They blocked a process of investigation and thereby forced the political committee to take further action in the interest of the movement. By this alone they have validated the charge that they have acted in a grossly disloyal way to the Canadian section of the Fourth International.

With regards to the specific evidence presented by Comrade Stone numbered 1, 2, 3, in the evidence and which was the basis of the points of information that the control commission was blocked from getting clarification on ---

Nearly every comrade in Halifax and in Fredericton participated in discussions which took place June 27th, --the day following the official day of the Atlantic provinces conference--at the same site as the conference. Also attending were Leon P _____ of the Montreal LSO tendency and tendency sympathizers Jean-Paul and Kim of the Montreal LJS.

1) Dowson and L _____ were told that no one was actually informed or invited to the gathering that took place on the 27th. Dowson and L _____ were told that the Executive Secretary of the YS/LJS Comrade Young, who had come from Toronto for the previous day's conference and had stayed over with no particular assignment, did not happen to arrive there, entirely by chance, whereas nearly everyone else did happen to arrive there entirely by chance. By chance comrade T. H _____ also did not arrive but ended up accompanying comrade Young.

2) The discussion, which said to have been completely informal and without plan, also just happened to concentrate on the differences which it was felt those participating had with the Executive Secty's report of the previous day---including women's liberation, the abortion campaign, and our policy towards Quebec nationalism.

3) While others claimed complete ignorance Comrade B-- stated that it was true that Comrade S _____ did protest what he considered to be a policy of excluding Executive Secty Joe Young, consciously decided upon by some or all persons participating in the discussions. Comrade B said that she dismissed his protest because she no longer considered him to be a serious comrade.

Whether it can be said that the June 27th meeting was the Atlantic provinces conference extended another day or not, is irrelevant. What in effect took place in Halifax was a meeting, in which Montreal tendency supporters participated as did all of the Maritime comrades. The existence of this meeting, in which Montreal tendency supporters participated, was kept from the knowledge of the Executive Secretary in Halifax at the time on behalf of the movement, and hidden from both the League and Youth CO until the I _____ Dowson probings at the hearings.

What took place on July 31st in Fredericton? Halifax comrades claimed that it was a chance and informal "gathering" which also happened to discuss what was described as wide sweeping political differences with almost every political position of the majority of the YS/LJS, and just happened to find almost every Halifax comrade there following a six hour drive along with Leon P _____ of the Montreal tendency and Kim C _____ of the Montreal LJS. Comrade T. H _____ affirmed that it was called by some "our mini-conference"- although he for aesthetic reasons, did not like the words. That this meeting took place was also unknown to the central leadership of the Youth and League until revealed by Comrade Stone.

The evidence given to the executive secretary by comrade S _____ on these two aspects, was completely sustained. These meetings involved nearly all the comrades in the Maritimes, including the four League members who are the actual leaders of the youth, plus members and sympathizers of the Montreal tendency, and took place outside the knowledge of the leadership and in an atmosphere of conspiracy against the leadership of the movement. Such actions gravely undermine all our efforts to build the Canadian Bolshevik Party that can only be constructed in an atmosphere of mutual trust confidence, and honesty in relations. We consider the leading role in preparing and participating in these meetings played by comrade(s) _____

to constitute an act of gross disloyalty to the Canadian Section of the Fourth International and a flagrant violation of their responsibility as league members to the YS/LJS in which they hold membership.

What about the information that two sets of minutes were kept by the Fredericton local - one being sent to the centre to appear as the official and accurate record, the other retained by Fredericton for its own use. A subsequent search of the YS/LJS central office files revealed that no minutes of any kind had been received since April.

The Halifax comrades disclaimed any knowledge of this matter. The Fredericton comrades denied that this was so in fact claimed that there were no minutes in any real meaning of the word since April. When checked by comrade L _____ the Fredericton records proved to be in great disarray and what records there were of meetings since April were still largely in the state of rough notes. From information gathered at the hearings and in discussions with the comrades we conclude that the Fredericton local had following the May YS Plenum in effect collapsed. This picture jibed with that outlined by S _____ to the LSA/LSO Executive Secty about the situation in Fredericton, but which did not enter into the evidence.

S _____'s evidence on the first two points was completely sustained by the investigation. We do not think that the investigation of point 3 discredited S _____'s allegations, particularly in the light of comments made by comrade RK formerly of Fredericton, to the Executive Secretary of the LSA. It would appear to us that the idea of preparing two sets of minutes, one of them especially for the CO, was in all probability talked about, flowing from the poisoned atmosphere that has been developing in Halifax and Fredericton of opposition and conspiracy against the centre, even though it does not appear to have actually taken place--probably because of the collapse of the Fredericton operation in April.

What about the sudden build up of debt by both Fredericton and Halifax (A)from zero to over 1,000 dollars in the course of a few months. The comrades in Halifax and particularly the comrades in Fredericton pointed to their previous undeniably excellent financial record with the centre.

hey appeared to be completely unable to comprehend that it was exactly his previous excellent relationship which was suddenly reversed without the knowledge or agreement of the centre, that was the cause of the uneasiness on the part of the centre.

They appeared to think their previous good record made it unnecessary to reply to central office requests for payment or that arrangements to pay be made. They explained to L -Dowson that unforeseen expenses occurred in travelling to Waterloo that so depleted their funds that they required the money allocated for registration to meet the costs of their return to the Maritimes. They appeared to think it normal that it was unnecessary to explain these circumstances to the comrades responsible for the league's and youth's financing, and seemed unable to comprehend that their rapidly building up these assorted debts could be any cause for unease in the center.

As for (B) --the failure of Comrade H to reply to correspondence from the executive secretary in July about Fredericton's activities in the NDP which he feared were jeopardizing the League's cross-Canada work in the NDP. During the hearing comrade H presented a record of poor communication from the center with Fredericton, as if this were relevant to the failure to answer correspondence of an urgent character from the executive secretary, written in the name of the political committee, involving the line of the movement in the key area of our work--the NDP.

Comrade H also read into the record some previous correspondence from the executive secretary expressing doubt about the Fredericton line, but along with this, assorted other statements by various comrades, generally commendatory of the Fredericton NDP work. The implication was that the executive secretary's views were only his personal opinions and had, if any weight, less than that of the assorted incidental opinions of other comrades. He took it further, from the political plane#by stating that the executive secretary returned from Europe "disoriented." He stated that Dowson lied when he denied H 's September 28 statement to the Fredericton YS that Dowson "approved our tactical perspective and verbally authorized us to intervene with these tactics." #onto a highly personal plane

The worst fears that lay behind the political committee's emergency and temporary suspensions were confirmed when Comrades H broke their silence on the NDP by forwarding a document entitled "NDP report passed by the YS executive September 28 to be introduced to the YS local October 2" This document confirmed in black and white what the central leadership sensed but was barred from taking any action by the disloyal conduct of comrades H

This document commenced; "For about nine months we have directed our NDP work towards building the Waffle in preparation for a decisive conflict with the right wing. This decisive conflict is underway. It began at the NDP convention September 25 and will end when the convention reconvenes on October 16." The report noted that a leading YS/LJS member took part in writing the Waffle Manifesto, another wrote the women's rights resolution and comrade H wrote the labor resolution.

This line is a clear violation of our entire orientation to the NDP, not only as outlined by our last convention but made even more explicit by the statement passed unanimously at our plenum.

The September 25 convention of the NB NDP saw a showdown struggled by elements who call themselves Waffle, and a de facto split. The political bureau of the LSA LSO , in defence of the movement, asked the editors

of Labor Challenge to make a public dissociation from the ultra-left line of the resolutions and any strategy of decisive conflict at this time with the right wing. This appeared in the October 11 issue of Labor Challenge and was carried forward in the November 8 issue of Labor Challenge.

When L. -Dowson arrived in Fredericton they were informed that, following Dowson's repudiation of H. _____'s claim that he had approved of the tactics and perspectives outlined in the September 28 report, all Fredericton comrades had withdrawn from NDP activity. They did so according to H. _____ because of the political committee's repudiation of its responsibilities of leadership. After reading the article in the October 11 issue of Labor Challenge which L. -Dowson brought with them, H. _____ asked if this was the line. When informed that it was, even though they stated their disagreement they committed themselves to implement it.

If it was at first unclear and a cause of grave concern to the political committee as to what line the Fredericton comrades were carrying in the New Brunswick NDP--the September 28 YS report supported by both comrades, H. _____ made it very clear that for the previous several months at least they had been carrying a line, behind the back of the entire movement (and not just the executive secretary writing in some personal capacity) which was clearly in violation of the democratically arrived at line of the movement which it is the responsibility of all members to uphold and the leadership to enforce.

The role of LSA/LSO members D. _____, O. _____, H. _____ and W. _____ in the situation that developed over the summer and fall in the Maritimes YS/LJS is indeed a reprehensible one. Instead of providing an example to the youth who have been finding their way to Trotskyism, they have acted in a most destructive way, against the interests of structuring an effective operation around the movement to which they claim adherence.

They attempted to tie the youthful and inexperienced forces in the YS/LJS, not to the pan-Canadian forces of world Trotskyism, but to themselves, on a narrow and personal, clique basis. In part this was done by never formulating whatever the views they hold, in a serious way so that they could be examined and evaluated both by the Maritime and pan-Canadian Trotskyists.

They have scarcely formulated their views and have never really documented them. They have been directing a hidden tendency behind the back of the movement. Even as late as October 9-11, when the LSA-LSO executive secretary and a top leader of the YS/LJS were in Halifax and Fredericton they were not so much as given a hint by the four LSA-LSO Maritime comrades that almost a month earlier, on September 16, they had signed an appeal which only a handful of comrades at most and none of the leadership of the Canadian section, the section that they are members of, had so much as heard about, until the United Secretariat sent a copy. This appeal, not to the Canadian section but to the United Secretariat, went far beyond "housekeeping" differences or differences in our work in the student and women's liberation milieu. They declared themselves as "comrades who have recently developed differences with the present line of the section" -- not only on "work in the student milieu and work in the women's liberation movement", but "with the present line of the section on Latin America and the statutes of the International", and as comrades who "are presently discussing the

possibility of forming a united tendency on the basis of our positions on the above mentioned questions."

But while the differences that they express in vague and general terms and formulae continue to expand and widen out, they continue to remain undocumented. The closest that the four LSAers have come to documenting them is not in the League but in the youth movement -- the YS/LJS. At the August YS/LJS plenum they were party to the presentation of two documents on the very day of the discussion and decision. During the hearings comrade B. of Halifax stated that while the idea for these statements came up at the Fredericton mini-conference, the signatures of endorsement of the two locals on them were erroneous, since the two locals had not actually voted on them. Comrade H-S was encouraged to present his views on the NDP to the League plenum. He was still in town following the youth plenum but he pulled back from taking advantage of the opportunity.

Because of the manner in which the four Maritime LSA-LSOers conducted themselves from the time that they became conscious of whatever differences they think they hold with the line of the Canadian section, the fact that they operated in an atmosphere of secrecy, and distrust, confused the situation in the movement. Because they did not know how to conduct themselves in a Bolshevik fashion they made it very difficult for the comrades assigned the responsibility of giving overall direction to the work of the pan-Canadian movement to know what was happening, how serious the situation was, and how to come to grips with it.

The Political Committee intervened in a process which was clearly a deteriorating one for our entire Maritime work. The intervention, while drastic, has proven to have been absolutely necessary in the interests of the entire movement.

The Political Committee anticipates that this experience, while a very important one from the point of view of coming to an understanding of the norms of Bolshevik organization, will become only an incident in the onward process of building the Canadian section. It anticipates that not only will all the Maritime comrades directly involved, but particularly those four members of the LSA who have been censured by the Political Committee, will learn by this experience and the entire movement will gain by it.

Ernest Mandel on Canadian tour

labor Challenge

#44 Nov 1971

Ernest Mandel, internationally renowned Belgian Marxist economist and theoretician, will be speaking on many Canadian campuses in December. Mandel, a leader in the world Trotskyist movement, will be taking up such questions as the resurgence of workers struggles in Western Europe; the world monetary crisis; Britain and the Common Market; and the European debate around workers control and self-management.

Mandel has written many important works on socialist theory, contemporary social struggles, and Marxist economics. His two volume treatise on Marxist Economic Theory has won the acclaim and respect of economists in many countries and his pamphlet Introduction to Marxist Economic Theory is now being used as a text in many European, Canadian and American universities.

Mandel has been barred from such countries as Switzerland, France and Australia, where government leaders feared his revolutionary ideas. This year he was banned from visiting the United States but has fought an important court battle, so far successful, to overturn the law under which he was banned. He is still denied a visa to the U.S. because the State Department is appealing to the U.S. Supreme Court to uphold its ban, after Mandel was supported by an earlier court decision.

The cross-Canada tour has been organized by the Young Socialists-Ligue des Jeunes Socialistes. Mandel's schedule will be: Dec. 6,



Ernest Mandel

Hamilton; Dec. 7, Brandon; Dec. 8, Winnipeg; Dec. 9, Saskatoon; Dec. 10, Vancouver; Dec. 11-13, Montreal; and Dec. 14-16, Toronto and Southern Ontario points. Mandel has been invited to speak by universities in each of the cities he will visit.

He will address a Quebec-wide educational conference of the Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière-Ligue des Jeunes Socialistes in Montreal Dec. 13.

Further information about Mandel's tour schedule can be obtained by writing the Young Socialists, 334 Queen Street West, Toronto 133, Ontario or by contacting the YS in your city.

Drive for 4,000 new readers

Will we make it?

by Peter Sharpe

Cross-Canada sub drive director

NOV. 15 — With one week to go, the joint Labor Challenge, Young Socialist and Liberation drive for 4,000 new readers has now reached 3,024 subscriptions, with 1,176 for Labor Challenge, 1,469 for Young Socialist and 379 for Liberation.

York University leads the way with 130 percent of its quota. We are assured that many areas like Vancouver, St. Catharines, Hamilton and Victoria will reach their quotas. Toronto is planning a series of last-push projects and report that they are confident they will go over the top.

The big upsurge in labor struggles in Quebec reported in this issue of Labor Challenge has led to a real growth in sales and influence of the voice of the socialist wing of the independentist movement, Liberation. On the day of the mass rally of 12,000 in the Montreal forum, Liberation came out with a special issue. Sales were brisk that night, as they have been in Quebec since the mass language demonstration on Oct. 16. Since then Liberation has sold itself out of two issues, more than 4,000 copies in all.

In order to respond to this upsurge and as part of a campaign to help build a Quebec-wide Socialist Educational Conference in Montreal on Dec. 11-12, the editors of Liberation have decided to extend their drive into the conference. That conference, at which leading figures from the Quebec language movement, the Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière, and internationally-known Belgian

Marxist Ernest Mandel will speak, will culminate the whole fall period of mass actions and campaigns in which Quebec independentists and revolutionary socialists have been active.

In our next issue, we will publish the final scoreboard for the joint subdrive, which we are confident will announce the success of the campaign.

Scoreboard

	Goal	Subs	%
York	100	130	130
Vancouver	600	586	98
St. Catharines	100	97	97
Hamilton	100	97	97
Victoria	50	45	90
Sudbury	50	44	88
Toronto	1100	900	82
Saskatoon	150	119	80
Guelph	50	35	70
Ottawa	150	102	68
Peterborough	125	80	64
Montreal	400	239	60
Richmond Hill	50	28	56
Kitchener-Waterloo	135	73	54
Hull	80	34	43
Winnipeg	125	49	39
Halifax	100	32	32
Regina	10	3	30
Fredericton	100	18	18
Edmonton	200	32	16
Quebec	—	33	—
Foreign	150	156	104
General	75	92	123
	4000	3024	76

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Leon Trotsky

Trotskyism and world revolution

by Ernest Mandel



Ernest Mandel

Many observers have commented on the rising strength of Trotskyism, particularly among radicalizing youth, in recent years. Even the Soviet bureaucracy and Moscow-oriented Communist parties around the world have been forced to launch an "ideological" campaign against Trotskyism — a tendency they claimed to have wiped out long ago. But their "ideological" campaign is nothing more than a re-hash of the old Stalinist slanders. Ernest Mandel, a leading figure in the Fourth International, explained the real meaning of Trotskyism in a debate with Monty Johnstone, a leader of the British Communist party, in November, 1969. The following four pages of Labor Challenge comprise Mandel's introductory remarks in the debate. They are reprinted from the June 1970 issue of International Socialist Review.

Ernest Mandel is a Marxist economist and theoretician who will be undertaking an extensive tour of Canadian universities in December. He is presently editor of *La Gauche*, a revolutionary socialist weekly newspaper in Belgium.

He is also a contributing editor to *Intercontinental Press*, published weekly in New York.

Mandel is the author of a number of works, including a two-volume treatise on Marxist Economic Theory.

Information on the Mandel tour may be obtained by writing to the Young Socialists, 334 Queen St. West, Toronto 133, or by contacting the YS in your area.

agency of fascism, or an agency of imperialism, or any of that nonsense. For if that were the case, not only would this debate not take place but many other things which have been happening in the world in the last few years would be incomprehensible.

One thing Trotskyism is not is a defeated tendency in the international workers movement. It is not a Menshevik-type revision of Marxism that has been crushed definitively, as was said in the Soviet Union in its fifteenth party congress in 1927; as was repeated by the unfortunate Nikita Sergelvitch Khrushchev at the twentieth party congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1956; as has been repeated over and over again in innumerable publications under the control of the Stalinist bureaucracy. Because, if it were really a crushed, defeated, nonexistent, eliminated, Menshevik tendency, why would anybody want to discuss with it? Why is Monty Johnstone here debating? Why is the Soviet bureaucracy after having crushed, destroyed, eliminated and vanquished this tendency, forty, thirty, twenty, and ten years ago, why are the spokesmen for these bureaucrats today forced to write books, pamphlets, and articles and keep coming back to this problem? Why have there been three or four new books on Trotskyism published in the Soviet Union in the last twelve months, if ours is a definitely defeated tendency?

So I think that the first point we ought to make this evening is to render historical justice to the founder of the Red Army and to the leader of the insurrection of the October revolution which initiated the first victorious working-class revolution in a whole country. On this ninetieth anniversary of the birth of Leon Trotsky, which coincides with the anniversary of the October revolution, the political movement he founded, the ideas he stood for, the program he defended, live stronger than ever in the world.

There is today a vibrant youth movement. Thousands of young people are coming to Trotskyism all over the world. And that is the only reason Monty Johnstone of the Communist Party feels obliged to debate with us about Trotskyism, that is the only reason why the Soviet bureaucracy has to put out a steady stream of speeches,

The very fact that Monty Johnstone is here debating with me this evening on the problem of Trotskyism today should in itself be considered evidence of what Trotskyism is not. I am not going to insult the intelligence of anyone present by saying that it is not counterrevolutionary or an

labor **Challenge**

New upsurge of world revolution in recent years has posed anew the basic ideas of revolutionary socialism defended by Trotsky.

Left to right, Czech struggle of 1968 was for socialist democracy and overthrow of Stalinism; Cuban revolution projected socialist path for colonial and semicolonial world; and French workers' revolt of 1968 reaffirmed revolutionary potential of working class in advanced capitalist countries.



Mandel: ‘Trotskyism lives and grows because it stands for revolution.’

pamphlets, magazine articles and books on the subject of Trotsky.

Trotskyism today is mainly a youth movement, a movement of youth that is being built and expanded on the five continents. For that very same reason I am not going to dwell in the least on the question that Monty Johnstone is going to talk about quite a lot: What Trotsky wrote or did not write in 1905, in 1912, in 1917, or in 1918. For I want to say from the beginning that this is pretty irrelevant to the actualities of the contemporary revolutionary struggles. Does anyone really think that 250,000 people vote for a Trotskyist presidential candidate in France, does anyone really think that in Ceylon today a Trotskyist trade union leader leads tens of thousands of workers in big strikes, does anyone really think that tens of thousands of people demonstrate behind banners which the whole of public opinion in Japan today calls Trotskyist, because of what Trotsky wrote in 1907 or 1912?

The overwhelming majority of these people have not read what he wrote and are not interested in reading all that—this is a mistake on their part, because everybody should be interested in the history of the revolutionary movement—but they rightly regard that as irrelevant to the main problem which we have to understand and explain: What is the origin, what is the root of the strength of world Trotskyism today, why do thousands and thousands of people flock to its banner on a world scale, and why do the Soviet bureaucrats and Monty Johnstone, their British spokesman, have to reopen a debate which they hoped had been finished with machine-gun bullets thirty or thirty-five years ago, in the period of the infamous Moscow trials?

I will give four basic reasons why the Trotskyist movement is stronger now than ever before; why thousands of people are adhering to it throughout the world; why it has a bigger numerical, geographical and political extension than ever before, even during the 1920s, while it was still a tendency inside the Communist parties and the Communist International.

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lating these countries out of their age-old miseries. Experience has also taught a much more terrible lesson. Thousands and thousands of Communists in Brazil in 1964, in Iraq in 1958, and five hundred thousand Communists in Indonesia in 1965 had to pay with their lives for the illusion that it was possible, desirable, or necessary to establish durable relationships of coalition and collaboration with bourgeois or semibourgeois political forces. Such a subordination and sacrifice of independent mass struggle can only lead to crushing defeat for the working class and the poor peasantry.

Trotskyism lives and grows, wins new members, attracts new tendencies and builds new parties in the underdeveloped countries because it stands for this basic rule of revolution. There is no way out for these colonial and semicolonial countries but the way of the permanent revolution. There is no possibility of acquiring real national liberation, real independence from imperialism, without overthrowing the bourgeois class together with the agents of foreign imperialism and the feudal and semi-feudal landlords. There is no possibility of liberating the people, peasants and workers, without establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat allied with the poor peasantry, without creating a workers state. Only in those countries where this happened—China, Cuba, North Vietnam, and it's happening now in South Vietnam—is there a way to social and economic progress. Wherever, through the responsibility of the Communist parties following the Moscow line, which is Stalinist Menshevism, that has been prevented from happening, there have been defeats, misery, tears and bloodshed for the working people of these countries.

It is this contemporary reality, rather than quotations from 1907, 1917, or 1921, that has to be faced by anyone who wants to understand what is going on in this sector of the world revolution. For the Trotskyist movement, for the revolutionary Marxists throughout the world, it was a moment of great vindication when the leading idea of the permanent revolution—that the only road to victory in a backward country is through a socialist revolution—was taken over by the Cuban revolutionaries and proclaimed in the Second Declaration of Havana, after the first victorious revolution in the Western Hemisphere. This gave proof that Leon Trotsky and the Fourth International

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— advertisement —

The first reason has to do with a basic problem of the colonial revolution and the way forward for the underdeveloped, semicolonial countries. Stalinism and Stalinist parties, parties which call themselves Communist, still follow a Menshevik or semi-Menshevik policy. That is, they believe as the Russian Mensheviks believed, that because these countries are backward, because the industrial bourgeoisie has not yet come to political power, that the immediate strategic task for the working class and poor peasantry is somehow to establish an alliance with this national bourgeoisie against imperialism and against feudal and semi-feudal forces. The aim of such an alliance would be to arrive at a coalition form of government—a "government of the four classes" as it was called in China from 1925 to 1927—a government of the "National Front," or a regime of "National Democracy," as it was called in the new official program of the Soviet Communist Party.

Experience has confirmed what Trotsky's theory of the permanent revolution proclaimed as early as 1906, that there is no way out for any underdeveloped colonial or semicolonial country along such a road; that any struggle that limits itself to fighting against rural feudal or semifeastal landlords, or foreign imperialism, while keeping the national bourgeoisie in power, while maintaining capitalist property relations intact, while refraining from establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat allied to the poor peasantry, will inevitably leave these underdeveloped countries backward, stagnating, exploited and superexploited by international and national capital.

Such a policy will not be able to tear the millions popu-

by Ernest Mandel

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formist or a centrist party. When revolution does break out, many people suddenly discover their revolutionary soul. But a revolutionary party has the constant duty to propagandize for revolution even if the situation has not yet reached the point of showdown between the classes. Its work in this respect can be an influential factor in accelerating revolutionary consciousness.

• Thirdly, we believe that the struggle for transitional demands, for those demands which cannot be incorporated or assimilated into the normal functioning of bourgeois society should not be conducted solely by propagandistic means. Every opportunity should be taken to impel the working class into motion around such demands. They should be introduced into the ongoing daily struggle of the class by all avenues. Unless the workers acquire experience by fighting for these demands in partial struggles they will be unable to generalize their outlook at the height of revolutionary intensity. Otherwise these demands will appear to them as something that falls from the sky, that is imposed from without or advocated only by small minority groups.

I would like to ask Monty Johnstone how he squares the following quotation from Lenin regarding the obligations of a vanguard party with the course followed by the French Communist Party in May 1968. Lenin said:

Will this situation last long; how much more acute will it become? Will it lead to revolution? This is something we do not know, and nobody can know. The answer can be provided only by the *experience* gained during the development of revolutionary sentiment and the transition to revolutionary action by the advanced class, the proletariat. There can be no talk in this connection about "illusions" or their repudiation, since no socialist has ever guaranteed that this war (and not the next one), that today's revolutionary situation (and not tomorrow's) will produce a revolution. What we are discussing is the indisputable and fundamental duty of all socialists—that of revealing to the masses the existence of a revolutionary situation, explaining its scope and depth, arousing the proletariat's revolutionary consciousness and revolutionary determination, helping it to go over to revolutionary action, and forming, for that purpose, organizations suited to the revolutionary situation.

Just compare that quotation, which breathes the spirit of genuine Bolshevism, with the conduct of the Communist parties of France, Italy, Greece, Belgium and other capitalist countries over the past twenty-five years (not to go still further back to the prewar period), especially with the conduct of the French CP in May 1968, and you will understand both the fundamentally reformist character of these parties and why thousands of young rebels are adhering to Trotskyism in these countries.

The third reason for the growth of Trotskyism today has to do with the crucial question of workers democracy. The main historical goal to be attained in those countries that have already abolished capitalism is the institution of democratically centralized workers self-management in opposition to the material privileges and the monopoly of political and economic power wielded by the bureaucracy. The bureaucratic rulers are the object of hatred by thousands of youth, critically minded intellectuals, and advanced workers in these postcapitalist states. That was graphically evidenced during those few months in the Czechoslovakia of 1968 when these elements of the population had the chance to

speak out, at least in part, their real thoughts and feelings.

The bureaucratic regimes in these countries are one of the main reasons for the discrediting of the cause of socialism in the industrialized West which deters much larger numbers of students, intellectuals, and workers from coming out wholeheartedly in favor of a socialist revolution and communism.

What I am referring to is not a full-fledged socialist society, that is to say, a society without any social differentiation, where commodity production and money relations have withered away. Such conditions cannot exist in any of the East European countries today and that is not what is involved in our discussion of their political situation and problems.

What is both possible and urgently called for in the existing situation is what I call a political revolution, a set of changes in the superstructure of the system which would initiate or fulfill the elementary demands of the Marxist and Leninist program on the nature of a dictatorship of the proletariat, leading to the building of a socialist society. In none of the works by Marx or Engels will you find a single sentence, for example, which asserts that the dictatorship of the proletariat means the monopoly of power by a single party.

Nor will you find the slightest support for the abominable notion that the dictatorship of the proletariat means the application of a repressive censorship, not against nonexistent representatives of capitalism and landlordism, but against the working class. These practices have been introduced and implemented by Stalinism.

The invasion of Czechoslovakia by the Kremlin bureaucracy not only violated the sovereignty and independence of a small nation and a fraternal and allied workers state. It was equally criminal in other respects. It identified the suppression of democratic rights such as freedom of expression for workers, students and intellectuals, with the name of communism by taking away from the Czechoslovakian workers the rights they had regained between January and August 1968 to vote independently on resolutions, to have them published in their trade union journals, to criticize the government if they disagreed with its policies and to criticize the managers of their factories.

These were not very extensive rights and they were a far cry from the full-fledged socialist democracy they were entitled to and striving for. Lenin in *State and Revolution* says that under the dictatorship of the proletariat the workers should have a thousand-fold more freedom of self-expression and self-organization than they enjoyed under bourgeois democracy.

Nevertheless, even this elementary right was taken away and hundreds of thousands of soldiers were sent into the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic for that purpose. That was a shameful disgrace. That is why we Trotskyists first have to reestablish what Marxism and Leninism really stand for, because the crimes of Stalinism have so distorted their true content in the minds of many workers.

Socialist democracy involves far more than the self-evident right of the workers to free expression without state censorship or penalties. Socialist democracy means the self-management of the working class on a democratically centralized basis. It means that the workers should run the factories not only as individual and separate units, but the economy as a whole. This requires the subordination of the national planning authorities to the congress of workers councils. It means that the mass of the working class actually exercises the power and determines through its discussions and decisions how the annual national income shall be divided between the consumption and the accumulation funds, that is, between what is used up and enjoyed for immediate needs, and what is set aside and reinvested for future growth.

Without the possession and exercise of such rights the working class does not really rule, whatever compliments

the official propagandists may offer to console it for its lack or loss of power. It is because the Trotskyist program most consistently advocates such democratic rule of the workers that it is bound to win more forces in the Soviet Union and East Europe, where the underlying trends of development are more and more directed toward a political revolution by the masses against the arbitrariness of the bureaucratic autocracy.

Tinally, Trotskyism is most noteworthy today for its uncompromising internationalism. After August 1914 and still more after October 1917, Lenin and the Bolsheviks set about to revive the principles and the instrument of internationalism which had been trampled upon by the pro-war and pro-imperialist social democratic leaders. One of the most bitter fruits of the anti-Marxist theory of socialism in one country, which Stalin originated and imposed upon world Communism from 1924 on, was the violation and the betrayal of the international solidarity of the working-class struggle. This flouting of internationalism culminated in the scuttling of the Communist International by Stalin in 1943 as a favor to Churchill and Roosevelt.

Now the leaders and followers of international Stalinism are beginning to taste some more of these bitter fruits, which result from subordinating the welfare of the workers movement to the narrow and selfish dictates of the Kremlin bureaucracy. They see the appalling spectacle of the two largest workers states in the world at each other's throats, and even hinting at the possibilities of hostilities between each other. This situation has come about not because either the Soviet or the Chinese masses willed it, but because it is a logical consequence of the despicable petty bourgeois nationalist tendencies and outlooks that guide the bureaucratic strata at the head of these countries today.

The Soviet leaders have even gone so far as to encourage and allow so-called communist journalists to talk about "the yellow peril" and to depict the Chinese people as misled by "new Genghis Khans" and as a "menace to civilization." The fact that such utterly reactionary and racist utterances can come from a government and a party that still call themselves communist shows the degree of degeneration to which these organizations have succumbed.

At the height of its power, Stalinism boasted of the monolithic character of the world Communist movement which was bound together by ideological terror and en-

forced conformity. Now all that is passed. The last Moscow conference of the "World Communist Parties" demonstrated how far disintegration has proceeded. There are hardly two Communist parties which have any measure of autonomy today that think alike and pursue the same line.

They contend against one another and harbor all sorts of divergent tendencies and factions. One can count up to fifteen different "Communist" tendencies on a world scale. The Stalinists used to deride the Trotskyist movement in the past for being ridden by incessant factionalism and splits. They are silent on this score nowadays—and for good reason! None of the splits among the Trotskyists has been comparable to the gigantic fissures that have opened up in the international Communist movement and keep widening from year to year.

Confronted with the tremendous centralized power of the imperialist counterrevolution in the world arena, the youth and the revolutionaries on all continents keenly feel the need for an equivalent centralization of their own forces. They cannot believe that the polycentrism and decentralization that characterize world Stalinism—where the revolutionary movement and the working class in each country is left to its own devices and no one is concerned with the international interests and aims of the struggle for socialism—is ideal. They cannot believe this because it runs counter to the most urgent needs of the struggle of the working masses and to the traditions of Marxism and Leninism.

They were moved to respond so powerfully to Che Guevara's famous appeal for "two, three, many Vietnams" because it corresponded to their innermost urge for an international coordination of their anticolonialist, anti-imperialist, anticapitalist efforts. Che's final message was essentially a call for some central leadership for the world revolution.

This explains why the idea of the Fourth International as a new revolutionary working-class organization carrying on the best traditions of Marxism, which so many dismissed as unreal and utopian, is capturing the minds and stirring the imagination of thousands of young people all over the globe. The socialist revolution cannot advance and certainly cannot triumph on a world scale without the resurgence of the need for a new revolutionary international impressing itself on the consciousness of serious fighters for a new world. The international we want to build and are building will be centralized, but it will not be bureaucratically centralized. It was the bureaucratic centralism of the Stalinist type, that fake centralism which had nothing in common with Lenin's conceptions of organizing the working-class vanguard, which spawned the disintegrated and reactionary tendencies at work in the world Communist movement today. History will prove that democratic centralism, with its freedom of discussion, is not an obstacle but the indispensable vehicle for elaborating a program and implementing united action against the class enemy.

These, then, are the four pillars of Trotskyism today: the theory and practice of the permanent revolution, the revolutionary road to socialism through working-class mass action in the advanced capitalist countries, political revolution for socialist democracy in the Soviet bloc and China, and proletarian internationalism. The Fourth International is a growing force on all of the continents because its fundamental ideas express the objective requirements of the world revolutionary process and carry on the ideas of Leninism, of socialism and communism in our epoch.

'Trotskyism is ...

internationalism.'



The Gray report: What's in it for us?

by Dick Fidler

Somewhere in Ottawa, in the deepest recesses of the government bureaucracy, there must be a filing cabinet with three drawers. One drawer contains the file on the Watkins report on foreign investment, which reported to the Pearson government in 1968. Another drawer contains the 1970 report on foreign investment of the parliamentary committee on External Affairs and National Defense, under chairman Ian Wahn, MP. And the third drawer, empty until recently, now contains the report on "Domestic Control of the National Economic Environment" completed early this year by Herb Gray, revenue minister in the Trudeau cabinet. The file cabinet is getting very dusty.

Ottawa files occasionally find their way into public view, however, and a partial text of the most recent of these reports turned up in the December issue of the liberal monthly Canadian Forum. Since then, the Gray report has been at the center of the growing debate on U.S. domination of Canada — a debate marked by much greater public interest and urgency since Nixon's Aug. 15 announcement of his "new economic policy" which threatens to unleash a world-wide trade war.

What does the Gray report reveal? What does it propose? How viable or useful are its proposals, and why was the Trudeau government so concerned with keeping it secret?

The Gray report, somewhat more comprehensive than previous studies of foreign investment, confirms that foreign ownership, chiefly U.S. ownership, is increasing; that entire sectors of the Canadian economy including the main growth sectors are now in U.S. hands; that foreign control is greatest in the leading manufacturing areas of the country, in the first place the industrial heartland of Ontario, whose economic growth largely determines the condition of the rest of the country.

More important, the statistical data the Gray report assembles, now that it is public, will help undermine the myth that foreign capital is responsible for the expansion of Canada's industrial plant. It confirms that a large and growing amount of new U.S. investment is in fact being financed out of Canadian "savings" — that is, profits, and deferred wages of Canadian workers (pension and insurance funds, bonds, etc.).

The report refers to some of the myriad ways in which increasing domination of Canada by U.S. firms has enormously aggravated the massive distortions of the Canadian capitalist economy, which does not on any level develop in terms of the needs of the Canadian people, but functions strictly according to the interests of the shareholders and coupon-clippers of Wall Street and Detroit.

It shows how U.S. control means that many Canadian firms, not just U.S. branch plants in Canada, are adversely affected by laws and policies made in Washington — through U.S.



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balance of payments programs, antitrust decrees, the Trading with the Enemy Act, or U.S. securities regulations.

The Gray report's comments on Canada's foreign trade position, written before Nixon's Aug. 15 speech, now ring particularly ominously: "Foreign control has probably made more difficult the task of developing distinctive capacities based on indigenous development which underlies good export performance... This is an important issue since trade in manufactures is increasing more rapidly than trade in resources and the terms of trade are progressively turning against resources. If Canada does not develop greater distinctive capacities as a basis for greater exports of manufactures, the country's share of world trade will progressively decline and increase the problem of maintaining high living standards."

The Gray report discusses at some length the relationship between cultural and economic independence, rejecting the view that Canada can develop "a distinctive Canadian culture" without taking steps to counter U.S. economic influence.

The Gray report apparently goes further than previous government-sponsored studies of this type in probing and documenting the effects of U.S. domination. The evidence he presents, limited as it still is, indicates the need for far-reaching measures, including massive public ownership to tear Canada from the stranglehold of U.S. imperialism. Yet, despite this powerful evidence that the vast majority of Canadians in no way benefit from U.S. capital, Gray never even considers such alternatives. Instead, his whole argument is a strenuous attempt to balance off alleged benefits of U.S. capital against the obvious detriments of U.S. control.

If Gray at no point attacks the fundamental myth that Canada's reliance on U.S. investment is the basis of the jobs and relative

prosperity of Canadian workers, he nonetheless does acknowledge that (as he puts it) "foreign control of domestic business affects adversely domestic control of the national economic environment."

What, then, of the various proposals to curb U.S. influence that have been advanced by some sectors of the Canadian capitalist class and even the New Democratic Party? What of the proposal that Canada "buy back" key sectors of the economy, as advocated most recently by Saskatchewan's NDP premier Allan Blakeney? Or the proposal that Canadian law provide that at least 51 percent of the shareholders of corporations doing business in Canada be owned by Canadians, as suggested by the Wahn report and former Liberal finance minister Walter Gordon and his friends in the Committee for an Independent Canada?

Gray looks at all these proposals, including foreign exchange controls, joint ventures, Canadian directorships etc., as suggested by the Watkins and Wahn reports — and rejects them all. Yes, he agrees, fixed rules establishing Canadian majority ownership, along the lines of similar legislation now in effect in Mexico and Japan, would indeed result in "a very substantial reduction" in foreign ownership.

But such measures assume that "a certain real benefit is acquired in obtaining Canadian ownership per se or, at least, some degree of Canadian ownership."

Gray favors a more pragmatic approach. "The evidence does not indicate substantially better Canadian performance by Canadian controlled firms than by foreign controlled firms with respect to expenditures on research and development, exports and further processing" (his emphasis). Which is not surprising, after all, since the same profit considerations apply whatever the nationality

of the capital.

Gray, of course, is not trying to tell us that Canadian control is irrelevant, or that foreign capital is inherently good for Canadians.

But if Canadian and U.S. firms — private capital — operate alike, does it not follow that the problem of the Canadian economy is not just foreign control, but capitalist control? Individual Canadian capitalists — Gray virtually admits it — wouldn't manage the economy any better. In fact, they were the ones who opened the door to foreign capital in the first place, and have kept it open ever since, collaborating hand in glove with the giant U.S. imperialist corporations in their exploitation of our resources and labor.

You can be sure that Gray doesn't draw this logical conclusion. His major proposal, and a very modest one it is, is to set up an agency to "screen" foreign capital — not to keep it out of Canada, but to "maximize the benefits and minimize the costs of foreign direct investment."

In this sense, this report to the cabinet does not even go as far as previous studies in making gestures toward establishing greater direct control by Canadian citizens over the country's economy.

The Gray report is convincing proof — if

Foreign capital dominates Canada

According to the latest statistics available, in 1968 the assets of Canadian firms which were 50 percent or more non-resident owned were worth \$50.7 billion.

Over 58 percent of the assets of Canadian manufacturing firms are foreign-owned. This included 99.7 percent of Canada's petroleum and coal products, 93.1 percent of rubber products, 87 percent of transport equipment, 81.3 percent of chemicals and chemical products, and 72.2 percent of the machinery industry.

While foreign — chiefly U.S. — ownership, is very high throughout Canada and in most leading manufacturing sectors, it is highest in Ontario, where 70 percent of all manufacturing industry is foreign-owned.

Ontario also accounts for the major part of all foreign-owned manufacturing industry in Canada, 58 percent of taxable income, which is two-and-a-half times the proportion earned in Quebec, the next most important province in this respect.

further proof were needed — that the Canadian capitalist class for which he is a leading spokesman from his position in the Cabinet, is incapable of separating their fate as a class in any way from that of U.S. imperialism.

His report documents to some degree how U.S. monopoly is so closely interlocked with

Canadian capital that it even dominates those very organizations which claim to speak for Canadian business. "Foreign-controlled business firms play active roles in such trade

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... Gray report

Continued from page 3

associations as the Canadian Manufacturers Association and the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. Indeed, they may constitute the main source of financial support for the CMA." And when has Ottawa openly defied the CMA?

The report is permeated with the belief in the continued stability of U.S. imperialism: "Even on the basis of very conservative estimates," goes a typical statement, "it seems clear that multinational enterprises (Gray's euphemism for imperialist corporations) will continue to grow and become increasingly powerful institutions."

So reluctant is the Trudeau government to even suffer debate on the question of U.S. control, that it attempted to suppress the Gray report. And once the report was released, Canadian business reaction was almost universally cool to its proposals. Even the proposed screening authority was greeted with profound scepticism.

But clearly the government feels increasing pressure to make some response, however tokenist, to the growing movement against U.S. domination of Canada. A cabinet minute leaked to a Montreal newspaper has revealed that back in July, the cabinet agreed to some sort of screening mechanism that would simply cover foreign takeovers of Canadian

firms.

But the developing debate can scarcely be encompassed by such milquetoast proposals. Commenting on the Gray report, NDP federal leader David Lewis said that "if subsidiary plants threaten to leave this country because of American policies then they should be taken over if necessary to make sure Canadian jobs and the Canadian economy are protected."

Subsequent articles will look at the different positions in the debate that has opened up over the Gray report and the challenge Canadians face as a result of Nixon's recent measures to strengthen U.S. economic hegemony.

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Canada—from colony to imperialist power

When is a Canadian firm "Canadian?" asks the Gray report. It cites figures showing that Canada is an imperialist power in its own right. "There are at present a number of Canadian-controlled multinational companies headquartered in Canada, e.g., the banks, Alcan, Polymer, Massey Ferguson, MacMillan Bloedel, Moore Corporation, Seagrams and Crush International. According to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, Canadian direct investment abroad in 1964 totalled \$3.5 billion."

But it seems that foreigners own 47 percent of these investments (e.g. Ford's subsidiary in South Africa). So great is the interpenetration of capital, Gray says, that "in some instances, their Canadian identity becomes nominal, e.g. Inco and Massey Ferguson. . . Are Alcan and Seagrams really Canadian-controlled?"

A socialist would point out that this

international division of the world market among a tiny handful of monopolists with the power to control prices, restrict supplies and wage wars, is the ultimate absurdity of capitalism. It underscores the need for an international world order based on socialist property relations, rationally planned and operated in the interests of the world's peoples.

Not so for the Gray report. It advocates that the Canadian government not only live with the imperialist corporations, but also try to get a piece of the action — by investing in Canadian-based "multinational" corporations through the Canada Development Corporation, purchase of shares or even direct participation in the Board of Directors. But, then, weren't Mitchell Sharp, the late Robert Winters — and that old Canadian "nationalist," Walter Gordon — all linked with the management of Brazilian Traction?

Big crowds hear Marxist economist

Ernest Mandel ended his cross-Canada lecture tour Dec. 15 with meetings at Trent University in Peterborough and McMaster in Hamilton. There were many highpoints on the tour with large audience turn-outs indicating an intense interest on Canada campuses in the views and writings of Mandel, the most authoritative exponent of Marxist economic theory today and a leader of the Trotskyist Fourth International.

Over 4,000 people came to Mandel's lectures in Vancouver, Saskatoon, Winnipeg, Brandon, Toronto, Hamilton, Montreal and Peterborough. In Manitoba he spoke to almost 1,000 at three campus lectures; in over 600 people heard him speak at three campus meetings and 200 at the Vanguard Forum. In Toronto, about 500 students and faculty attended his lecture at York and over 400 at a rally sponsored by the League for Socialist Action and the Young Socialists.

In Montreal Mandel spoke to about 500 at McGill, the Universite du Quebec and at the national educational conference of the Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière — Ligue des Jeunes Socialistes.

The author of the well-known Marxist Economic Theory, Europe Versus America, and The Formation of the Economic Thought of Karl Marx, Mandel spoke at campuses on the current capitalist monetary crisis. At the public rallies of the LSA and YS he gave an inspiring report of the resurgence of workers' struggles in Western Europe and the growing strength of the revolutionary socialist vanguard in the workers movement.

At the University of Toronto, Mandel was

the guest lecturer of the School of Graduate Studies and the Department of Political Economy. He led a seminar discussion, chaired by Professor Mel Watkins, on "Marxist Perspectives on Economic Theory."

Mandel, banned from the United States by a

State Department ruling, was able to reach through to certain American listeners within range of Toronto CBC Television. An interview was telecast by the program "Two-thirty Toronto Time", which is rated to have 300,000 viewers in Southern Ontario and across Lake Ontario in the U.S.



photo by Jeff White

MANDEL AT UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO. At right is Prof. Mel Watkins, Waffle leader who chaired seminar sponsored by the Political Economy Department.

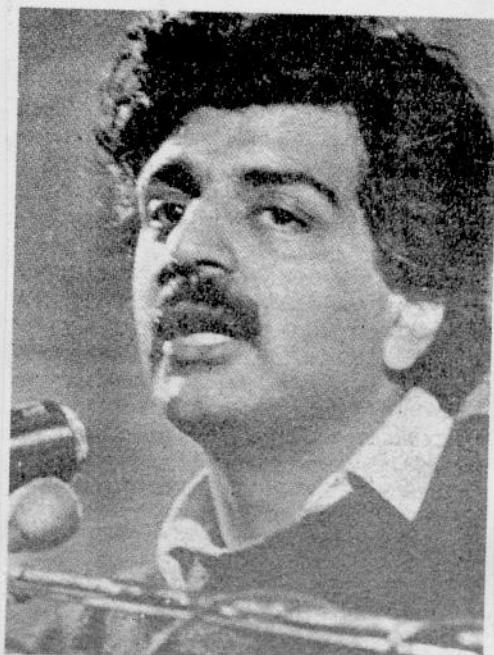
Tariq Ali tour slated for mid-January

Tariq Ali, well-known Pakistani revolutionist and a leader of the International Marxist Group in Britain, will tour Canada Jan. 10-20, speaking on the Struggle for Bangla Desh and the Indo-Pakistan War.

Ali, who is presently an editor of the newspaper Red Mole, is best known in North America for his two books: *The New Revolutionaries*, an anthology of writings by revolutionaries of the new left which he edited; and *Pakistan: Military Rule or People's Power?* which was published in 1970 following his extended trip to Pakistan and Bangla Desh.

Tariq Ali's tour is being arranged by an ad hoc committee, The Tariq Ali-Solidarity with Bangla Desh Tour Committee, which has invited individuals and organizations who support the Bangla Desh independence struggle to assist its work. Plans are being made for campus meetings across the country as well as city-wide public meetings in several Canadian and Quebec centers.

Address inquiries to Phil Courneyeur, Tariq Ali Tour Co-ordinator, 334 Queen Street West, Toronto 2B, 364-5908.



Tariq Ali

Teach-in debates UN intervention

PETERBOROUGH, Ont. -- A teach-in on the "Liberation Struggle in Bangla Desh" at Trent University Dec. 1 heard Andrew Brewin, MP, foreign affairs critic of the NDP, Ali Akbar Khandakar of the Bangla Desh Association of Canada, and Phil Courneyeur, educational director of the League for Socialist Action, discuss the issues behind the war on the Indian subcontinent.

Much of the discussion centered around Courneyeur's contribution. He attacked Canada's role as a supplier of aid to the Pakistan dictatorship, including military aid until this spring. He cited an interview with the head of the Canadian International Development Agency in the Nov. 18 Canadian India Times, in which Paul Gerin-Lajoie said that Canada does not know what happens to the aid it sent to East Pakistan. "Whether it does in actual practice reach displaced persons and people who are really in need of food aid in East Pakistan we are not able to

check," Gerin-Lajoie reported.

The panel ended with a disagreement between Brewin and Courneyeur over the idea of an international peacekeeping force and United Nations intervention. Courneyeur opposed UN involvement as a certain violation of the right of Bangla Desh to self-determination and cited the record of the UN in Korea, the Mideast and the Congo as examples of the UN's pro-imperialist role. Brewin did not agree, claiming that some sort of international action through the UN seemed to be the only means of coming to the aid of the refugees and war torn East Pakistan.

The teach-in was sponsored by the Trent University CUSO (Canadian University Service Overseas), World University Service and the Peter Robinson College Social Action Committee. After the meeting the audience donated generously to an unofficial collection in solidarity with Bangla Desh.

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FOREWORD to the website edition

This document is not only of historical interest, sketching as it does the history of the Trotskyist movement in Canada; it also expresses the most complete development of the Trotskyist orientation to the mass, mainstream independent labor political party in Canada – the only such labor party in North America – the New Democratic Party.

This document outlines the strategy that the Canadian Trotskyist movement tested and refined over 40 years in coming to grips with the challenge posed by the existence of the NDP, which from its birth as the agrarian-based CCF evolved into a mass social-democratic labor-based party, which for historical reasons has been able to position itself as the obligatory first step in the political education and mobilization of the Canadian working class. Thus, Canadian Trotskyists see the mass NDP not only as in the way but also “on the way to” labor’s political development towards establishing socialism in this country – a dialectical concept that also obliges the forces of revolutionary socialism to relate to and participate closely in this party.

By 1948, in the judgment of its author Ross Dowson, the formerly agrarian-based CCF had acquired the decisive support from the Canadian union movement to be recognized as a labor party. Furthermore, with the consolidation of the major Canadian union federations’ support in the “re-branding” of the CCF as the New Democratic Party in 1961, there was henceforth no doubt that the Canadian working class would hereby

first pass through the experience of a reformist labor party on the road to workers power in this country.

However, the advantage and opportunity afforded by the existence of this mass-based parliamentarist labor party formation – first the CCF then the NDP – could be realized by a dialectical approach to the question, in recognizing the need for a strategic orientation to this mass formation which would vastly help in legitimizing revolutionary socialist ideas, particularly as applied with the powerful concept of Trotskys Transitional Program. This is method of applying concrete demands such as nationalization of industry and resources in the context of plant closings or foreign takeover and control, or of ending Canadian complicity in US aggression throughout the world, or of womens rights to control their lives and bodies through abolition of abortion laws, etc. These transitional demands not only fulfil democratic (i.e., reformist) needs, but in reality they either cannot be fully realized without a socialist revolution nor can even serious reforms leading to partial realization of these demands be initiated without mass mobilization of the class, which is the first requisite of the march towards socialism. Most importantly, the context of raising these transitional demands before the working class within the political arena of the labor party is far more powerful than that of an unconfident labor movement fighting for concessions from bourgeois parties.

In fact, the real indirect political influence of this labor party intruder into the hallowed halls of bourgeois Parliament is much greater than the marginal vote percentage it garners and its under-representation in terms of seats won. The NDP appears a marginal player on the federal plane but in reality this labor party is solidly in the mainstream of Canadian politics, and with the impending victory of the NDP's pressure for electoral reform – proportional representation – and the increasingly likely departure of Quebec from Confederation in a decade or two, the NDPs destiny is clearly to become a major force which will be soon thrust into power in Ottawa. Thus, a key sector of the North American working class will take power in its own name, the first step in the struggle for a socialist North America.

This document outlines this long struggle of Canadian Trotskyists for a mass orientation to the class – in reality, the obligation Canadian revolutionists must come to grips with – as well as its pitfalls and dangers to building the revolutionary vanguard – the central task facing us of rebuilding the revolutionary cadre, as the author saw it.

==J.D., January 2006

End notes

In the Introduction

NDP – New Democratic Party, formed in 1961 and successor to the CCF

CCF - Cooperative Commonwealth Federation, formed in 1932 as an agrarian-based Social-democratic party

Socialist League, formed in 1974 in Toronto, ideological successor to the LSA; became known as the Forward Group in 1977

In ‘Opposition to Orientation’

Third World Congress since Reunification – 1968; the third congress since the 1963

Re-unification W.C. of the Fourth International, which was founded by Leon Trotsky in 1938

VMC - Vietnam Mobilization Committee, the anti-war united front in which the LSA played a leading role in the 1960s

In ‘Cannot be by-passed’

International Executive Committee (IEC) of the FI – the Fourth International grouping headed by Michel Pablo, the leading European exponent of entrism *sui generis*.

United Secretariat - Fourth International grouping including the US, Canadian and British sections in opposition to Pablo’s line, dissolved with the reunification of world Trotskyism in 1963

In ‘Concept of Entry’

Bonapartist state – historical reference to the military regime thrown up in the later stages of the French Revolution straddling the contending forces of the rising bourgeoisie, the monarchist reaction and the revolutionary proletariat, i.e., a period of sustained supra-class “dual power”

In ‘Liquidationism’

The Militant – journal of the U.S. Socialist Workers Party, American section of the F.I. until 1980

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Introduction

The following document was written in 1970 by Ross Dowson and entitled at the time Our Orientation to the NDP – as a strategy - and its tactical application. It both projects an orientation and at the same time outlines the history of its development and application over some three decades of experience both in the NDP, and in its precursor the CCF, by the Canadian Trotskyist movement.

At the time of writing it was the unanimously agreed upon viewpoint of the Canadian Trotskyists. It was presented in the name of the Political Committee of the League for Socialist Action/La Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière and adopted without dissent by its 1970 convention. It was not put to a formal vote solely for reason of the fact that, while it stood on the diverse work of the past and pulled it all together, it also contained considerable interpretation of history with which the quite youthful delegates could not be familiar.

In the next few years, with the ebb of the youth radicalization and its backlash on the LSA/LSO, which had as yet few substantial roots in the working class and which this orientation was designed to overcome, the LSA/LSO was shoved off its base and suffered a series of splits which in turn led to more splits. Thus today we are witness to a

substantial growth in the number of persons who call themselves Trotskyists but at the same time a continued process of organizational fragmentation.

As testimony to its living significance, the document that follows becomes one of, if not the chief centre of contention as ultra-left pressures hit the Trotskyist movement, splintering almost the entire leadership that it had pulled together. Of all the various groups it is the Socialist League that has continued to stand on this document. We publish it not only because of its timeliness but in anticipation that it will help overcome the present fragmentation and place a united Trotskyist movement back on the correct path, making it the decisive factor in the continuing radicalization which is now down deep into the union movement and its political expression, the NDP.

by Ross Dowson – Toronto, ON Canada – May 1976

(Ed. Note : The date 1963 on page 17 under the subhead « Liquidationism » is in error and should read 1953, as is confirmed by the subsequent dates 1954 on page 18 and 1955 on page 20, and as confirmed by the editor, a member of the SEL by 1958.)

The Socialist Vanguard and the New Democratic Party

The revolution that is coming — that will place the working women and men of this country in full command over its vast resources, that will link it to the worldwide struggles of the working class, and lay down the foundations of the new socialist order of peace and freedom — requires a party as its organizer and director.

That party must be built along the lines of a revolutionary vanguard. Not an elitist formation of self-appointed saviors, but a party of working women and men completely dedicated to the struggle of the workers, a party of leaders of the class — a combat party armed with a revolutionary program.

No other type of party will do. History has already recorded that without such a party the revolution in an advanced capitalist country such as Canada is an idle dream.

From words to deeds

But to proclaim the need for such a party — to repeat it endlessly as some do — and to actually move effectively in the direction of building such a party are two totally different things.

Those forces that have already grasped the essential outlines of this idea are confronted with a working class movement which has already taken on a structured form. These forms have a tremendous resilience because, however inadequate, they now serve the class interests — even when they no longer do so they remain a force because of the class's historic memory of when they did.

Ever since the end of World War II the most wide-spread and profound political experience of the class has been the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation and its continuator, the New Democratic Party.

For some years now the Canadian workers have been organized as a class in trade unions. The war years saw the workers in basic industry unionized and today the ranks of organized labor stand over 2 million strong.

From combating individual capitalists or alliances of capitalists over immediate economic issues such as hours, wages, and conditions, the workers have been compelled to move out onto the political arena as an independent class force against the capitalists organized as a class and through their political parties in control of the state apparatus.

The CCF, from the period 1943-48 on and now the NDP from the day of its founding in 1961, is the political party of the English-Canadian working class. It is the form that the labor party has taken in English-speaking Canada.

In Quebec, the CCF-NDP has not developed strong organic links with the trade union movement or gained a mass base among working class militants. It would appear for the whole next period at least that the nationalist upsurge has passed it by.

However, even here, to this day, the CCF-NDP has been the only political structure to pose across Quebec, however embryonically, the question of independent working class political action.

The NDP is a reformist party

The NDP is a reformist party — not a revolutionary party. While in its ranks there are forces that will come to the revolution, this party will never make the revolution nor can it be reformed to serve this purpose. It is encrusted with a leadership and a program permeated with the concepts of class peace and class collaboration, although, at the critical juncture of its formation in 1961 and for a short period after, it was what Leon Trotsky described in 1938 to us Americans as "not a party but an amorphous political mass movement" with a revolutionary dynamic. It is nationalist, identifying the fate of the Canadian working class with the fate of the central bourgeois state — and not internationalist. Its leadership has made parliamentarianism not a tactic in the struggle but the supreme principle through which change alone can come.

This party has been characterized at various times as the primary expression of the politics of the working class, as expressing the present level of consciousness of the workers, or as being in advance of the level of consciousness of the working class as a whole.

In this period of extreme national and international crises, when class antagonisms recurrently take on the most explosive character — how can one estimate with any degree of accuracy, even over a very limited period of time, where the working class is at, at what stage is its consciousness, and how firm is its adherence to various structures and to various forms of struggle.

To be sure, there are hundreds of thousands of working class men and women who do not think in terms of politics at all or continue to support one or another party of the capitalist class. They have yet to take the simplest act of a working class political character by voting NDP. There are tens of thousands of workers who have over the past years formed a firm commitment to the NDP and its leadership and will not be easily

shaken from it, and to be sure there are many workers both inside and outside of the NDP who are to the left of it, who have already some understanding of the inadequacy of its program and an even clearer idea of the opportunist and class collaborationist character of its leadership. But insofar as the revolutionary socialists have been able to confront them, there are few in number who are yet prepared to move out and beyond the NDP.

Thus the NDP represents both an opening to and a barrier against; stands both on the way and athwart the way to the building of the revolutionary vanguard. For the class as a whole over the entire past period it represents a progressive and important step forward in their political development and it will continue to do so for some period.

Touchstone of class politics

The NDP cannot be ignored and it cannot be bypassed. It is the touchstone of class politics. All working class politics revolve around it and an incorrect position on it is fatal. It is not yet its association and support for the criminal record of the Soviet bureaucracy that is the albatross around the neck of the Communist Party of Canada so much as its known record of opposition to the CCF and the NDP, to independent working class political action. The CP's opposition to the NDP has not remained in their class collaborationist theories expressed in convention but has been exposed to workers by its consistent running of blocks of candidates against the NDP and in particular against the most left candidates.

The position of the Canadian Trotskyists vis-à-vis the CCF from the time that it could be said to have become the Canadian labor party is expressed organizationally in the formation of the Revolutionary Workers Party in 1946 — an attempt to pull the necessary cadre together for a future entry; the dissolution of its public face and the entry of our forces as a disciplined democratic centralist revolutionary socialist formation into the CCF in 1952; the formation of the Toronto Socialist Educational League in 1955 (and later the Vancouver Socialist Information Centre) at a time when the CCF was static and there were new possibilities of cadre building through regroupment of diverse socialist forces; and the formation of the League for Socialist Action in 1961 to intervene in the birth processes of the New Democratic Party.

The orientation to the CCF-NDP has been the fundamental orientation of Canadian Trotskyism since World War II. In general our position in relation to the CCF-NDP labor party formation has been one of unconditional support and, but for the period of entry from 1952 to 1956, intensive fraction work with a non-split perspective.

We say unconditional in the sense that our defense of the USSR is unconditioned — that we lay down no terms or conditions to the Soviet regime to warrant our defense of the USSR itself. We defend the USSR as a workers state — should a series of transformations take place as to qualitatively alter its class character we would cease to defend it. But suppose the NDP violates some of the most basic interests of the working class. The Labour Party of Great Britain through Wilson completely underwrote the U.S. genocidal war against the people of Vietnam and imposed a wage freeze on the British unions. This caused some to reject electoral support of the Labour Party and even to cease to characterize it as the labor Party — the mass political expression of the British

working Class — but to define it as a bourgeois party.

It is not at all excluded that the NDP could move to such positions. We would not support such positions. But at what point would we say that we no longer support the party — at what point is it no longer the labor party? Only when it ceases to represent in the eyes of the class the alternative to the parties of the bourgeoisie. In our opinion the betrayals of the British Labor Party leadership have not had such an impact as to result in a qualitative change in the party's relation to the class.

On another occasion we commented this way: the NDP not only betrays the basic principles of socialism, which it does not even claim to ascribe to, but even from time to time the most elementary interests of the workers. But it has not betrayed the level of consciousness of any substantial and viable layer of the working class.

Opposition to orientation

Our CCF-NDP orientation and its effective application has been the hardest fought position in the history of the movement, established against trends of centrist conciliationism and liquidationism into the NDP, sectarian opposition to, and in more recent years, spontaneist and adventurist hostility to it, leading to defection from the revolutionary vanguard itself.

This rejection of the labor party flows from the same basic illusion touched on by The New Rise of the World Revolution adopted by the Third World Congress since Reunification. It explained: "The sudden development of the new youth vanguard into a mass movement has caused the resurgence of the worship of spontaneity. This is another new obstacle to a breakthrough by revolutionary Marxists." Earlier the document referred to an incorrect interpretation of united action as follows: "The success of such actions is indispensable to victory in specific episodes in the class struggle. But our historic task is not just to achieve episodic victories; it is to lead the working class to victory by overthrowing the international capitalist system and capitalism in each individual country. If we limited ourselves solely to united actions, we would run the risk of a general defeat in the wake of episodic and ephemeral successes. This would more and more sap the potential for further successes, because what is most necessary to achieve such successes is a correct theoretical and practical grasp of reality, which is unattainable without the incomparable instrument of a revolutionary party."

"Such conceptions," the document continues, "are based implicitly or explicitly on the illusion that thousands of students or young workers fighting shoulder to shoulder against the Vietnam war, for a 'confrontation' with the bourgeois university or even capitalist society as a whole, have already reached the same ideological level as the revolutionary Marxists and that therefore a revolutionary Marxist party and International are no longer necessary."

This spontaneist tendency arising with the worldwide youth radicalization has

rejected the NDP out of the same logic. Because the youth radicalization has as yet developed apart from the NDP, because its massive united actions do not look to the NDP for leadership, they conclude that the NDP has been definitely bypassed, not merely by the thousands of students and young worker participants in mass demonstrations, but by the class as a whole.

This tendency which (*Al*) Engler and (*Brian*) Slocock gave expression to in our movement, saw our fundamental orientation, the identification of the LSA/LSO with the NDP, as a barrier to our effective identification with and full involvement in the new wave of radically developing youth. They saw our identification with the NDP as giving us a conservative image and as an impediment that had to be got rid of, while we see it as increasing our political effectiveness. We see such slogans as "Win the NDP to Socialism," through which we express our NDP orientation, as giving depth and direction to the radicalization, as a means to direct the youth militants to a comprehension of what class it must link its struggle to — the working class — in order to render it more effective, as a means to raise and educate youth militants in class politics. Our spontaneists saw the struggle continuing to move outside of the NDP, and the revolutionary wave completely bypassing the NDP.

Interestingly enough, this view did not find them more vigorously proclaiming the "pure" Trotskyist program and seeking on every occasion to more dramatically present the independent banner of the LSA/LSO or the Fourth International, but on the contrary adapting to spontaneist elements, taking a completely opportunist course, and rejecting the revolutionary vanguard party first in the concrete, insofar as it existed in the LSA/LSO, and then in theory.

Slocock cautioned us about not imposing an artificial and abstract mass perspective on the spontaneous development of the majority of antiwar militants, and advised us that our attitudes to such new formations as tenant organizations, COPE (Vancouver electoral popular front) should not be determined by our NDP orientation, but each case must be decided on its own merits (page B, Bulletin 1). It was just two years ago, with great erudition and endless analogies, he predicted that the radicalization of the working class will not be reflected into the NDP through the constituency organizations, but through the trade union movement. Work in the constituencies and through artificially erected "Socialist caucuses" is of little value, he declared.

Needless to say the new radicalization has by no means bypassed the NDP but has been reflected within it, not only in constituency organizations and union locals but in the federal convention and even the parliamentary caucus.

While the NDP leadership has taken no real initiatives to involve the party in the anti-Vietnam war movement and for a whole period savagely attacked those who did, its top leaders now grace the platforms of the mass rallies, head the demonstrations, and through their actions identify the NDP with them, and carry the NDP into the antiwar movement. While the Canadian Party of Labor (Maoists) came to the VMC-sponsored

march on Ottawa this spring all geared to boo and heckle the major speaker, the notorious right-wing NDP leader David Lewis — they had to keep their silence. Lewis forthrightly attacked U.S. aggression against the Vietnamese revolution as imperialist, condemned the Canadian government for its abject material and political complicity and demanded the cessation of arms sales and the withdrawal of U. S. troops from Vietnam now.

What about women's liberation—the most ongoing struggle involving new layers of radicals with the most explosive potential? When the abortion caravan hit Ottawa it found immediate support from the NDP parliamentary caucus. MP Grace McInnis firmly identified the NDP with the caravan by addressing the rally that welcomed its arrival. Liberationists chained themselves to the parliamentary gallery and so interrupted the session with their demands for immediate action that the government was forced to adjourn this sacred institution of bourgeois democracy. Some of the party leaders dissociated themselves from this action but others appeared amongst the Liberationists in a gesture of support. The (*Dr. Henry*) Morgentaler case around which the fight for "Free Abortions Now" is developing has firm support from the NDP.

The NDP leadership have proven sufficiently flexible in meeting the challenge of the new wave of radicalization to preserve the image of the party as a party of the left.

It is difficult to prove the effect of much of our work at any given moment and sometimes for a whole period on the course of events. Often, when it would seem that it had little or none whatsoever, later developments prove quite the opposite. For an extended period, we concentrated considerable effort in the NDP across Canada, in B.C., Alberta, Ontario, etc., to build socialist caucuses. Slocock characterized them as being "artificially erected" and "of little political value." But scarcely were the words written than there appeared in the NDP right across the country the so-called Waffle — a broad left-wing formation composed largely of radical anti-imperialist youth with 1/3 of the votes at last year's federal convention and which has since become a stable left-wing force across the country.

Revolution by the class

Spontaneists and confrontationists see the NDP as taking steam out of and tending to divert the militancy of the struggle into parliamentary and reformist channels. But isn't this really just another expression of their lack of understanding of or unwillingness to face up to the fundamental problems of making the revolution? The revolution cannot come out of the confrontation-escalation politics of the Spontaneists no matter how dramatically or how brilliantly their actions are planned. The youth radicalism has to link up with the working class with their vast numbers strategically enmeshed in the working gears of society. In the United States it is difficult for student radicals to see the working class as a class, let alone as a potentially radical force — hence there has been considerable dissipation of their forces in ultra-leftist adventurism.

In the United States where there is no labor party this by no means indicates a

lack of reformist illusions – quite the contrary. They are not on the plane of whether socialism can be won by parliamentary means, but on a much lower plane — whether one or another capitalist party can be an instrument for social change. By that token alone, they tend to be parliamentarist. Whereas the NDP is a minority, often hamstrung by electoral trickery and parliamentary procedures, actions identifying with it often take on an antiparliamentary character and pose revolutionary challenges.

In Canada the revolutionary potential of the working class is much easier to grasp. Not only are the workers organized in unions but their unions are much more socially oriented; they are heavily involved in the NDP with its broad social outlook. In fact, the unions are the dominant force in the NDP. The NDP constantly poses the need for working class power. Since it is a minority party and must continually seek to widen its support, it is necessary for it to move out in protest demonstrations and rallies to continually sharpen the discontent of the workers and organize them along political, even if reformist, lines.

And history records more than one occasion when the struggle has transcended from one for reforms to revolution.

Cannot be by-passed

Insofar as we Trotskyists recognize the NDP as a progressive step forward for the working class, in that sense, indirectly, it can be said we help to establish it. But the fact is that the NDP is there, is a tremendous reality and it plays that role completely outside of our support and even our existence. And revolutionists who do not have an orientation to it cannot get anywhere.

This has been clearly brought home recently by the demise of the Saskatchewan-based Committee for a Socialist Movement — a broad catchall organization at its peak of some 200 revolutionaries outside the NDP. In the short year and a half of its existence it has known nothing but crises over its direction. What blew it up were differences that developed around its orientation to the New Democratic Party and its left-wing Waffle caucus. The first split was when some 20 key leaders, largely in Regina, pulled out to work exclusively in the NDP and Waffle. The next split was the leadership of the Saskatoon Group, who opposed attacks on the Waffle appearing in the CSM paper. They viewed the NDP as a labor party and were for working within it for a socialist program — although they consider it necessary to go beyond the NDP and Waffle. They have joined the Young Socialists. What remained split again, the first group, named by its advisor and our erstwhile comrades (*Al*) Engler and (*Jean*) Rands "The Middle Way," seeks a way outside the NDP and the policy outlined by Trotskyists. The second talks of armed struggle and rejects the NDP on completely sectarian grounds. Both are by now quite probably scattered to the winds.

In no way does our orientation to the NDP distort or inhibit the full responsible functioning of the LSA/LSO as the nucleus of the revolutionary vanguard. Not only does it link it up to the most significant expression of the class conscious development of the Canadian working class, permitting it to go through the experiences of the class with the

class, testing our ideas, allowing us to take every advantage of every developing possibility but it makes our movement and our aim, the Canadian socialist revolution, take on a much more comprehensible character.

Our orientation to the NDP has nothing but good results for us. We described it this way in our 1963 convention resolution:

"The LSA's orientation to the NDP makes it much more attractive a force than it would otherwise be. Our orientation places our whole program in a realistic framework. Regardless of all its shortcomings, in its overall significance the NDP projects the need for working-class power. The fairly extensive layer of workers who in advance of their class, have already a generally correct assessment of reformism, find a small revolutionary socialist group unattractive — even though they may concede that it is theoretically correct — for it can offer little immediate possibilities of struggle. Their understanding therefore becomes largely passive, without perspective. Our orientation to the NDP, our projection as a socialist caucus, with the aim of winning the NDP to a socialist policy makes us much more attractive and more capable of winning such forces to our side. The merits of our orientation from this viewpoint, which stand completely outside of what forces we may or may not actually have in the NDP at any given moment, must not be overlooked. Our NDP orientation places our forces, small and involved as they are in what is largely education work of an even academic character, in their proper perspective. It projects in broad lines the direction and possibilities of the struggle in the whole next period, thus heightening immensely our attractivity."

That orientation to the CCF-NDP which has been our strategical line since the end of World War II, has been mistakenly characterized by some as entrism. In reality, while within the framework of the orientation the Canadian Trotskyists have implemented a wide range of tactics, only on two occasions has the Canadian movement carried out entry.

What is the entry tactic? Entrism, in general, means the revolutionary vanguard dissolving itself as an open independent organization under its own banner into another non-Trotskyist organization for a period. While it is normal that Trotskyists should have their own open movement propagating their full program, under certain circumstances (in order of course to add forces to the revolutionary vanguard) it is a justifiable tactic to take down the independent banner to permit a full entry into another organization.

In Canada a group that had earlier split away from our movement to form the League for a Revolutionary Workers Party, associated with a U. S. group around a B. J. Field, added this to their bag of differences with our movement claiming that, contrary to us, the public independent party had to be sustained at all times and under all circumstances as a matter of principle.

There are of course many dangers facing Trotskyists who have entered another centrist or reformist movement. The internal cohesion of Trotskyists who enter, must, if anything, be even greater than it is as an independent public force. In essence Trotskyists

become a hardened cadre caucus fighting to win new recruits to the full program of Trotskyism in order later to reestablish themselves as the independent public vanguard organization.

Our first experience in applying this tactic was the entry into the CCF during 1936 which was sharply and decisively ended in 1938. It was of the classic type devised by Leon Trotsky, sometimes called the French turn, and most successfully applied by the U. S. Trotskyists. In the mid-thirties a leftward-moving current developed in the Socialist Party of the U. S. The American Trotskyists dissolved their public face, gave up their own public press (soon to be replaced by another press), fused with the main forces in this current and then after a sharp struggle reconstituted their independent movement on a considerably expanded basis, at the same time dealing a political opponent a blow from which it never recovered.

The other entry was carried out by the Canadian Trotskyists over a period of three and a half years commencing in 1952 at approximately the same time as the International Executive Committee of the FI headed by Michel Pablo projected a concept of entry *sui generis* ("of a unique type") on an international scale and of an extended duration. This entrism, which was practiced by almost all the European sections of the movement either into Stalinist or social democratic labor parties, was only terminated after almost two decades by the new wave of radicalism that broke over the movement in the late sixties and was the subject of a resolution prepared by the majority of the United Secretariat that appeared in International Bulletin No. 7. May 1969.

The second entry conducted by the Canadian Trotskyists had little or nothing in common with entry *sui generis*, certainly as Pablo, through his Canadian supporters, came to interpret it. The Canadian entry was terminated after a relatively short span of three and a half years after an incisive split carried out by a minority. Commencing the entry apparently in agreement with the majority as to its nature, this minority came to give a totally different interpretation of it which they claimed was Pablo's. Pablo subsequently recognized them as the Canadian section prior to their complete liquidation into the reformist milieu and disappearance from the political scene.

The second entry was ended with the expulsion of the main Trotskyist forces in the East from the CCF, the formation of the Socialist Educational League and the publication of *Workers Vanguard*. Ever since then, the Canadian Trotskyists have maintained an open Trotskyist organization with public organs — today four — and have carried a wide range of independent activities — all within the framework of our CCF-NDP orientation — unconditional support of the NDP with an extensive fraction within it.

In the resolution dealing with our work in the NDP which was adopted by our 1966 convention, we described the implementation of our orientation as follows: "It means that the NDP remains the focus of all our politics — but not the center of our

activities" — that center was the new wave of youth radicalization.

The United Front

How to establish the hegemony of the revolutionary socialists over the left? An initial tactic devised to achieve this was the united front. Lenin devised this tactic following the failure of the Communist International to win important sectors of the workers within social democracy to the banner of the Communist parties. The united front was designed to effect unity in action of Communist Party and Social Democratic Party workers on issues of common concern. The parties would march together while retaining their separate identity. Through such a device the greatest possible striking power would be brought into play against a common enemy. At the same time it was anticipated that the Communist Parties would effectively demonstrate the superiority of their ideas and their party, win the best workers from the social democracy, and thus establish their hegemony over the entire left. The tactic of the united front remains one of the most precious tools in the arsenal of revolutionary politics

The tactic of entry was first carried out by our French comrades in 1934. It was predicated on the fact that our own forces were weak and isolated, and that an important and viable left wing in the social democracy was developing in our direction. They joined the social democratic party as a body, in order to work within it as a fraction to come in contact with its left wing, to influence it, and to fuse with it, and thereby broaden the basis for the subsequent construction of a new revolutionary party — a Trotskyist party — in France.

Concept of entry

The first entry carried out by the Canadian Trotskyists was in 1937 into the CCF which we characterized even as late as 1946 as "predominantly an agrarian social-democratic party with its primary base in the prairie radicalism of the western farmers ... its membership in the major industrial cities of the East primarily middle class with a small sprinkling of highly skilled workers. The forces of Canadian Trotskyism were limited almost entirely to Vancouver and Toronto. The Vancouver comrades had earlier proposed entry into the BC section of the CCF to the executive committee. The matter was now discussed through the movement and they took that action independently. Then in the summer of 1937 the executive committee majority submitted a one-line resolution to the party — resolve that the executive committee endorse immediate entry into the CCF. A minority replies that the CCF was stagnant and declining and that there was no left wing that could be won to our ideas. After a long and extremely bitter conflict, the organization convention, by a very small majority, voted to enter the CCF. No sooner had the motion been carried than almost the entire top leadership headed by Jack Macdonald, apparently exhausted by the years of isolation and grueling struggle, stood aside. Maurice Spector, the other leading figure in the movement, had already led Canada to work in the U. S. party where he lined up with A.J. Muste against entry into the Socialist Party. The entry was thrown into the laps of young and quite inexperienced comrades and its conduct was further complicated by the failure of much of the minority (who were actually a majority of the movement's activists) to participate. just these circumstances

alone guaranteed that entry would threaten the movement with liquidation.

Not only did this entry prove fruitless in so far as bringing new blood into our movement, but the conditions and atmosphere in the CCF infected our own forces. Many comrades became demoralized and dropped away, some even became completely acclimatized to the reformist milieu.

It was not until late in 1938 that the remnants of the entrists and non-entrists with the aid of the International, became reconciled and the entry was terminated. Our weakened forces reconstituted themselves as the Socialist Workers League, but before they could consolidate and renew their national connections the Second World War broke out and the movement was driven underground. The Canadian movement, unlike our co-thinkers in Britain and the U. S. who were able to function openly with only modest adjustments, was driven underground by sweeping repressive legislation.

In November, 1944 a Canada-wide conference was held in Montreal that pulled together our forces and prepared the organization of the Revolutionary Workers Party two years later. Even as we reconstituted this nucleus of the vanguard as a public independent party, we did not by any means reject the possibility of being faced again with the necessity of re-entering the CCF in our struggle to build the mass revolutionary party. On the day of its formal organization the RWP took a CCF orientation – fraction work in the CCF but with major emphasis on building the independent party. Without this necessary preliminary pulling together of cadres, a subsequent entry into the CCF was inconceivable.

In 1943 the delegates to the convention of the Canadian Congress of Labor, formed in 1940 through unification of the All Canadian Congress of Labor and the Canadian section of the CIO, voted to endorse the CCF as the political arm of organized labor. By 1948 it became obvious that the CCF had not only taken on important strength but had sunk real roots in the working class areas in all the major metropolitan centers and had become — in effect — the labor party.

With that the movement made CCF fraction work a more serious part of party work and raised the question of the advisability of carrying out an entry into the CCF. Commencing in 1948, the leadership began to prepare the movement for possible entry. Thus we come to the second entry carried out by the Canadian Trotskyists. At that time the IEC headed by Pablo was projecting entry *sui generis* in the major sectors of the globe.

How did the Canadian Trotskyists see their entry? Unlike many other periods in the history of the Canadian movement, this one is fairly well documented. The major document unanimously adopted by the 1951 convention is entitled "The CCF — Our Tasks and Perspectives" and that is exactly what it is: a detailed analysis of the CCF, and the challenge it poses for the Trotskyists in their struggle to build the revolutionary vanguard.

This document differentiates the entry that it projected from the type of entry known as the "French turn." Its premise was "not the existence of left formations — nor an increase in internal democracy in the party or a wave of growth." Its premise was that the CCF has now all the skeletal forms of the labor party, and that while we have gathered some precious cadre — we are small. We projected that in this period of extreme national and international tension, of McCarthyism and the cold war that "the CCF under the next upsurge," we projected, "will embrace the class. The class will go there and nowhere else; there it will undergo the experience of reformism – and there, given the perspective of world and Canadian capitalism will move forward to the revolutionary solution of its problems." And we said: "The struggle for a program that will express the opposition of the masses to the oppressive burden of the war and the encroachment of the Bonapartist state will thrust up a new leadership that will do battle with the Coldwell-Douglas-Millard leadership. The program, we stated very clearly, "will be the transitional program of the Fourth International; the leadership," we underscored, "will be the Trotskyist leadership of the Canadian revolution." That is, the only alternative to the reformist leadership was Trotskyism.

This discussion brought to a close, at least on the surface, a longstanding, wearing struggle that had developed in the Toronto branch with an unprincipled personal clique formation headed by Joe Rose. This clique had only in June 1951 finally put its political views down on paper — they then denied that the CCF was the mass political party of labor and formally counterposed the concept that the genuine left would only develop through the trade unions. At the convention they suddenly switched, voted for the entry, and Rose was put on the Central and Political Committees.

By March 1952 our B.C. forces publicly announced their entry without prior consultation with the P.C. In the East as we began to implement the entry, the Rose clique began to develop widening differences. Veering wildly from their previous sectarian evaluation of the CCF they moved, not to the majority position of long-term entry, but toward liquidation into the CCF milieu. They became super-security-conscious, refusing to support the application for membership of a comrade in a CCF club in which they held membership. Finally, using as an excuse the readmission of a former member in the movement, who they claimed was a security problem and whose case went before the Control Commission where it was cleared, they walked out apparently in order to protect their own security in the CCF.

The Rose group, and those who later joined it, postulating the need to remain in the CCF "at all costs," were unable to undertake any serious left-wing initiatives, fearing that challenges to the party's right-wing establishment might provoke disciplinary reprisals. The majority, on the contrary, moved out in aggressive actions to build the CCF left and expand the Trotskyist forces. While it was felt necessary to drop our public press, we made a big effort to stimulate the BC leftists to launch with us a journal for the broad left, we were instrumental in the publication of a rash of constituency bulletins popularizing transitional demands, and our American co-thinkers allocated space in their press which we commenced to promote. We developed bookstores that carried all the

publications of the Trotskyist movement, we held public forums in Toronto which utilized our comrades who had been refused membership in the CCF — and we ran candidates for public office. We made every effort to carry on with the key work of recruiting and developing Trotskyist cadre.

Liquidationism

Rapidly the dispute which resulted in the split of world Trotskyism into two tendencies grouped around the International Secretariat and the International Committee which was healed only in 1963, broke over our heads. The Canadian leadership was totally unacquainted with these developments until it read Comrade Cannon's "Open Letter to Trotskyists" published in *The Militant*. It was an appeal to the worldwide movement to unite in a struggle against Pablo's revisionism. The Vancouver comrades immediately identified themselves with the "Open Letter." The leadership in Toronto equivocated in the belief that the issues at dispute could be discussed and decided upon at the next world congress.

It was then that a minority in the leadership and in the Toronto branch headed by Fitzgerald and McAlpine commenced to give a new interpretation to our entry — one that had never figured in any of the discussions and documentation that had decided the entry. Their arguments developed the need for entry along the following lines: 1) that the Third World War was thundering down on us, 2) that we would enter into this war with the present alignment of forces on the left — the Communist party, Social Democratic and labor parties – substantially as they are now, 3) that the Trotskyist forces woefully small must at all costs enter as rapidly as possible the Communist Party or Social Democratic/labor party, whichever was the effective movement of the working class in their respective countries, 4) that we could be confident that out of the impact of the world holocaust on these parties the revolutionary instrument would be forged, with our forces playing a contributory role.

Entry *sui generis* ("of a unique type")

To question these broad and sweeping generalizations, to suggest that the timetable might be inaccurate, that events could take place that might drastically alter paths that the traditional parties of labor might well go through, some crises that would open up new roads for Trotskyism, was dismissed or ridiculed as holding on to old concepts as not facing up to the new reality. We were even violating the position of the Third World Congress, we were told, which we had voted for without any criticism but which we were only now informed had such concepts unknown to us and not brought out to our attention at the time but firmly imbedded in them.

Suddenly on Jan. 25/54, to the embarrassment of the minority, the Rose clique bounced back into the arena with a Committee for a Socialist Regroupment. They appeared as 100% opponents of the Cannonite majority 100% supporters of Pablo and called for a split in Canadian section. The minority and Pablo himself in a letter to the leadership dissociated themselves from the split.

But among the resolutions and documents of the 14th plenum held by the IS headed by Pablo was one decreeing the suspension from membership in the International all members of the IEC who support the "Open Letter" who approve it and who are trying to rally on this basis the sections of the International. It ordered the suspension from their posts of leadership in the sections all those who signed these appeals or approved them.

This ukase handed to the leadership of the Canadian Trotskyist movement to enforce was immediately operative against Ross Dowson, a member of the IEC, executive secretary and member of the CC-PC, and against Reg Bullock of the CC. Dowson had come to identify himself with the "Open Letter." If taken seriously as intended it would have decapitated the movement at one blow – placing the minority in control. The minority abstained, but not before stating their complete agreement with it and expressing regret that due to the nature of our party, because of its political level, this instruction was inoperative.

While it was clear where the Canadian Trotskyists stood, preparations were made for a convention. Suddenly on April 7, the Rose clique, along with a few other drop-outs, applied for restoration of their membership in the section. The Toronto branch voted to table the matter until after the convention called for April 10 and 11. The minority, demanding immediate acceptance, stormed out of the meeting. A day or so later a letter dated April 8 appeared entitled "The Canadian Section of the Fourth International to Carry On." It was signed by Fitzgerald, McAlpine and Grenier and announced an emergency conference for April 11 "to continue the Canadian party with all those who support the International" and to "name a temporary executive committee and a delegate to the 4th World Congress."

This rump "Conference of the Canadian Section" publicized the fusion of the Fitzgerald-McAlpine splitters with the Rose clique. Their interim NC among other strange flowers numbered in its circle one Comrade Houston, whose readmission into the section had earlier served as the pretext for the Rose clique desertion from the movement.

Fitzgerald attended the "Fourth World Congress" as the recognized delegate of "the Canadian section of the Fourth International." Before completely disappearing from the scene this assortment of splitters and deserters gave a further lesson in their interpretation of entry *sui generis*.

Suddenly almost every Trotskyist who had managed to enter the Ontario CCF found himself charged by the CCF brass with being a member of an opponent political party. As it turned out, having once started out on a liquidationist course, the rump section's alternate NC member Houston carried it further by turning informer to the CCF brass. A little later, full NC member Rose carried their entry to its ultimate. When appearing before the investigators Rose went state's evidence for a promise that his membership might later win favorable consideration.

Was the liquidationist course to be explained away as the aberrations of disoriented individuals? When the Rose clique's call for split characterized the schism in the world movement as being between those who "are still applying the formulas of the thirties which because of the new world realities have become empty clichés" when it said: "In the words of the IS 'let the dead bury its own,' only the living can make an effective contribution to the victory of Canadian socialism," and its previous position of carrying out the entry "at all costs," it was only echoing Fitzgerald and McAlpine's words about facing the new world realities, about grasping the new Trotskyism. But what role did Trotskyists have to play at all in Pablo's war-revolution concept which was automatic and irreversible?

For its major forces which were concentrated in the East the second Canadian entry was terminated by the expulsion of almost its entire entered forces in the CCF. The Socialist Educational League was launched publicly in December, 1955 with new elements who had been won in the course of the anti-expulsion fight who constituted an effective fraction in the CCF with a no-split perspective.

However, it is apparent that regardless of the expulsions, the forces of Canadian Trotskyism, in order to meet the challenge of events that were already developing, would have ended the entry in the next year or two. This is clear from the character of their activities over the next five years, the struggle along with the Vancouver comrades against a liquidationist current that developed in their branch, and the formation there of the Socialist Forum in February 1959, later the Socialist Information Center, and finally its fusion with the Toronto-based SEL under a common name — the League for Socialist Action.

In its evaluation of the entry *sui generis* held over from the Third World Congress Since Reunification in the International Information Bulletin May 1969, the United Secretariat referred to the "conjunctural factors" that were particularly cited in the debates at the time it was first projected in the early fifties, and to "the structural factors" that were emphasized when the tactic was being applied.

The resolution states: "(7) The citing of conjunctural factors proved some time later to have been in error, the economic perspective turning out to be completely the reverse and giving to a prolonged favourable cycle, the danger of war postponed. On the other hand the crisis of Stalinism developed considerably faster than had been visualized." Nonetheless this entry as practiced by several sections ended only as the impact of a turn marked as being around 1966 (as the new wave of youth radicalism broke over them) led them to alter their tactics in this field. According to Comrade Pierre Frank in his report on entrism "this tactic was and proved itself to be the one possible for a whole period."

Even today, 19 years after, the 1951 convention document's broad projection for the CCF-NDP entry remains accurate. The workers as a class are going through an NDP experience — it is only taking longer than we expected. For Bolsheviks that time is

precious time indeed as it gives us new opportunities to accumulate and develop cadre which is absolutely essential if we are to take advantage of the favorable turn of events to make a revolution.

And already by December 1955, when they had been expelled from the CCF and had set up the independent Socialist Educational League with its press the *Workers Vanguard*, the Canadian Trotskyists were feeling the pressure, the need to free themselves from the restraint that long-term entry tended to impose.

Two months after the public appearance of the SEL came the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and its revelations of the crimes of Stalin, followed shortly by the uprising in Poznan (*the Polish workers' anti-Stalinist Solidarnosc movement—ed.*) and then the Hungarian revolution. The Communist parties throughout the world underwent a profound crisis. In Canada the entire Quebec leadership split away, followed shortly by the defection of nearly all its public figures save Tim Buck. How could the Trotskyists, entered in the CCF, meet this challenge?

Within the orientation

The CCF leadership began to shuck off every last remnant of socialism symbolized by the "Regina Manifesto" as they cleared the way for the launching of the NDP with the newly united CLC. The dumping of the "Manifesto" set off centrifugal forces throughout the CCF. Prominent BC left-winger Rod Young announced the formation of a new socialist party. How could entered Trotskyists block this dissipation of forces? Regroupment becomes a matter of great interest in socialist circles' — how could Trotskyists, entered in a movement from which many of these forces were decamping, participate? Not only did the war not come, but a powerful antiwar movement commenced to develop, particularly among student youth, the first expression of the student radicalization that was to gather momentum through the '60s. The Cuban masses under Fidel and Che took power and offered a new pole of attraction on the left.

Obviously entry was becoming increasingly insufferable. The SEL moved out, within the framework of its CCF orientation, but quite prepared to risk the security of its CCF fraction, for it needed every force at its disposal. We moved right in on the CP, circulating literature discussing and challenging their line. In front of a mass membership meeting we forced CP leader Tim Buck himself to agree to a public debate (which of course never came off). We initiated a series of regroupment forums with the ex CPers in Montreal. We launched an independent Toronto Socialist Youth Forum. As the CCF was being played down prior to the launching of the NDP we entered a candidate in a Toronto federal riding in 1958 where a token CCF candidate was in the running. When the CCF made a no-contest deal we went into the Hastings-Frontenac by-election to challenge the Minister of External Affairs for his seat. We consolidated youth contacts gained in the antiwar and labor party youth movements by launching in 1960 an open and independent Trotskyist youth organization, the Young Socialists. We moved out to popularize the Cuban cause and launched the Fair Play for Cuba Committee.

These initiatives were not taken without meeting some resistance within our own forces. In the Vancouver branch an opposition clique developed around Bill Whitney. Only for a short period had the Vancouver comrades had the opportunity and the responsibility of defending the full program of Trotskyism particularly in its highest form of expression, the building of a vanguard, in contest with all other political tendencies. They had been deprived over an extended period of time of that condition that is normal and healthy for the full development of revolutionary socialists. Like the prisoners in the cages of Vietnam's Thieu they had been long cramped up and some such as Whitney lost the use of vital faculties. To this day Whitney is an able articulator of many of the basic theoretical concepts of Trotskyism but he is hopelessly crippled with liquidationism.

After many long and tortuous discussions where agreement was made to terminate the BC entry, which never seemed to get implemented, Whitney became isolated, the branch moved out and he broke. In February 1959, the Vancouver Socialist Forum was launched through Malcolm Bruce and Fred McNeil, former top leaders of the CP who had come to our side.

Cadre gathering

It was in this period that we gathered the key cadre for the next big opportunity that the CCF, to become the New Democratic Party, faced us with. The situation was without precedent. The Canadian Trotskyists were confronted with the challenge of being in on the birth of a new mass labor party formation. The next turn proved that through the hectic and trying struggles of the previous decades we had laid true and sound foundations under ourselves, that we had developed valuable cadre.

No revolutionary opportunity, no matter how profound, produces its own cadre. At best it only provides the culture where its elements can begin to flourish and coalesce as cadre for the next upsurge; or the opportunity for cadre that has already been formed in a previous struggle to intervene and transform itself and move forward to victory. We proved in the crucial period of 1957-63 that we had gathered together invaluable forces, that we had assimilated the program of the revolution, and that we had learned how to implement it—its politics. But we had not had time to accumulate sufficient cadre. It is this that is the ongoing and supreme challenge before the Canadian and world Trotskyist movement.

In 1955 with the merger of the Trades and Labor Congress – American Federation of Labor to the Canadian Congress of Labor – Congress of Industrial Organizations which had endorsed the CCF as labor's political arm since 1943, new opportunities opened up to widen the bases of support for independent labor political action. The CCF brass saw it as a chance to broaden their apparatus and to rid themselves of a broad left wing concentrated largely in the Prairie provinces and B. C. This left-reformist to centrist wing had crystallized in opposition to the rightward course of the CCF top brass largely around the party's founding programmatic statement known as the "Regina Manifesto." This statement, essentially Christian pacifist, nonetheless committed the movement to public ownership of the basic means of production and to irreconcilable opposition

against "Wars designed to make the world safe for capitalism."

While the "Manifesto" had long ceased to have any relationship at all to the completely opportunist positions to which the parliamentary caucus consistently committed the party, the CCF leadership formally decided to get rid of it. As the Ontario leadership expressed it in their provincial council minutes "the CCF should endeavor to make its appeal more pragmatic, more empirical," and should publish some new basic literature "which would restate the application of democratic socialism in today's world and in today's terms." That turned out to be the "Winnipeg Declaration of Principles" which dumped public ownership for public control, and replaced abolition of private profit and corporate power with the concept of social planning. This statement was jammed through the 1956 CCF Convention in Winnipeg.

The dumping of the "Regina Manifesto" was of course also highly agreeable to the trade union brass. The *United Autoworker* applauded the new look: "Many in organized labor will welcome the 'Winnipeg Declaration' . . . with the tag 'Socialism-Will-Cure-Everything' off its back the CCF should be . . . much more acceptable to union voters."

Early in 1957 the CCF leadership, through a series of formal and informal secret discussions with the CLC brass, laid the basis for a Joint Political Action Committee, subsequently set up by the CLC 1958 convention and renamed the National Committee for the New Party. It projected a series of seminars, conferences and forums throughout the country at which CCF'ers, unionists, farmers' organizations, "professional people and other liberally minded persons" could prepare for the launching of a new party to be founded in July-August 1961.

These developments had a shattering effect on the old CCF left, which we had concluded after many experiences was exhausted as a viable force. Many of them walked away, others talked in terms of splits, on the West Coast of tearing the BC CCF out of the federal movement, or of setting up a new socialist party.

We Trotskyists, however, saw a tremendous new opportunity opening up for us and decided to throw every ounce of energy into the debates, seminars and discussions, into every process leading to the formation of the new party, the new labor party striving to assure its being launched as a revolutionary party.

Of course, we knew that it could not be a vanguard party. But we decided to do everything possible to project our ideas into the situation, to give it a revolutionary program, to permeate it with the spirit of our transitional program.

We saw the situation confronting us as similar to that speculated upon by Trotsky around the possible developments of a labor party on this continent back in 1932.

"It is evident that the possibility of participating in and of utilizing a 'labor party' movement would be greater in the period of its inception; that is, in the period when the party is not a party but an amorphous political mass movement. That we must participate

in it at that time and with the greatest energy is without question, but not to help form a 'labor party' which will exclude us and fight against us but to push the progressive elements of the movement more and more to the left by our activity and propaganda. I know this seems too simple for the new great school which searches in every way for a method to jump over its feeble head."

At that juncture the Communist Party was staggering from crisis to crisis— set off by the 20th Congress revelations of the crimes of Stalin. The anti nuclear arms struggle, the Cuban Revolution and the Black struggle in the US were stimulating new elements and moving them to the left. There was a feeling of protest developing in the ranks of organized labor against the crushing of the IWA's (*International Woodworkers' union—ed.*) organizing drive in Newfoundland and the rash of union-busting legislation.

The old alignments were breaking up —there was significant sentiment for the regroupment of socialist forces — the most notable expression the Council of Socialist Clubs in Montreal. The seminars and conferences on the new party were attracting new forces. We were actively involved in all these processes.

Formation of the NDP

We threw the pages of our press, the *Workers' Vanguard*, wide open to discussion on all the issues. We explained the need for the new party to commit itself to public ownership, why it must take a clear and unequivocal stand against the war drive. We took on every opposition, from the Stalinists who tried to scuttle its development as a class party by advocating a "democratic national coalition of patriotic forces for peace," to the sectarian critics on the sidelines who were unable to distinguish the unions from the bureaucrats, to the Galbraithians, to the would-be liquidators into the bourgeois Liberal Party. We urged all socialists, no matter their tendency, to come in and fight for a class struggle policy and a militant leadership.

At the same time we projected the Trotskyist movement even more vigorously to the fore through fusing the Toronto-based Socialist Educational League to the Vancouver-based Socialist Information Center and launching out as the League for Socialist Action — a cross-Canada movement. We published and circulated on a big scale a simple programmatic pamphlet popularizing our transitional program and presenting ourselves as a socialist tendency whose relationship would be best expressed as an affiliate of a federated labor party.

The New Democratic Party was launched as a labor party by some 1800 voting delegates who made it the most representative working class assembly that has yet taken place in this country. The tumultuous policy debates showed the radical potential of the Canadian working class.

Our understanding of the processes at work, the implementation of our orientation, was overwhelmingly vindicated by this founding convention. The old

leadership of the CCF, allied with the trade-union bureaucracy, prevailed but not without a head-on collision with a core of delegates who won such widespread support that it could only be defeated by the just elected national leader T.C. Douglas, blackmailing the delegates into submission by announcing his resignation should they adopt an anti-NATO-NORAD resolution.

The youth radicalization

For the next two or three years the tempo of NDP development continued forward at a high pitch. In Quebec in the 1965 federal elections, with practically no provincial organization and heavily marked as an English and federalist party, its vote shot up 60% to 18% in Montreal and 12% of the total vote. But increasingly it tended to move to the right, to become more structured, more bureaucratized. In 1963, a large proportion of comrades who were our most important connection with the NDP through its youth movement, were expelled.

Without doubt our greatest successes in the earlier, formative years of the NDP were in the youth arena. In 1961 while the League firmed up as an open and pan-Canadian movement, the Young Socialists dissolved their public face and entered the NDY in order to integrate their forces fully in the building of the NDP's youth movement, the New Democratic Youth, to build its left wing and to consolidate out of it a revolutionary youth cadre. In key areas of the country — Ontario and British Columbia — they provided some of the main leadership force in the NDY.

The Young Socialists recruited their first substantial forces out of the NDY and trained them in the fires of its internal struggles. Our forces faced repeated and sweeping expulsions, which we met with vigorous public defense campaigns through which we were able each time to reconstitute our fraction — with an increased number of new recruits who, if less experienced, were nonetheless completely immersed in the process of gaining invaluable experiences.

During this process the YS launched a Trotskyist youth newspaper, and through it expanded its open activities. In 1966-67, as the ascending youth radicalization began to move past an NDY paralyzed by its right-wing leadership we withdrew from it and launched an independent Trotskyist youth organization which, from an effective point of view of intervening in the struggle, can be said to have replaced the NDY in the youth arena. At the same time as the YS carries our orientation to support the NDP propagandistically, without doing fraction in the NDP, it is able to operate in many ways as the pro-NDP student organization.

At our 1963 convention we concluded that the formative period of the party was then ending and at the same time new opportunities to widen the base of our league not finding reflection in the NDP were opening up. We therefore decided to pay more attention to our NDP work in the trade unions and to direct more time and energy to our independent work, to build the antiwar movement, to increase the circulation of our literature, to develop our forums. One of the most significant decisions of this new stage was to step up our commitment to participation in the developing struggles in Quebec.

We began to develop the increasingly apparent possibilities for coalescing widely diverse forces behind an anti-Vietnam war movement in 1965. The work of our US co-thinkers was of tremendous value for its scope, for the movement was more limited here, its course of development in many ways has paralleled that of the US. Our "single issue" "End Canadian Complicity" strategy, fought out with all currents and tendencies in conferences across the country, has firmly established a movement that has been capable of a whole series of actions, ever renewing itself as new waves of youth enter into the struggle. While our opponents have labeled the anti-Vietnam war movement "Trotskyist," the imperialist aggression in Vietnam has evoked such response, has proven to be such a key factor in the radicalization process, that all forces, like it or not, have had to participate in its mass actions.

The anti-Vietnam war movement has been the broadest ongoing movement In decades. Only the rising women's liberation movement, with which there is an inevitable interaction, would appear to be approaching it.

Whereas the NDP and trade-Union brass first repulsed all approaches of the antiwar movement, then took a cautious, passive attitude, they have been compelled to make identity with it We gave them no peace. We buffeted them from both inside and outside and thus have helped to raise the level of an entire mass in key sectors of the Canadian working class. In the process of this ongoing and vital activity which we have carried, we have established right across the country a whole layer of comrades who are widely respected as leaders in their communities and whom the NDP and trade-union leadership have had to recognize.

At the same time as we moved out freely and independently of the NDP milieu, in keeping with the dynamic concept of our NDP orientation, our fraction reached out of its localized, contracting work areas to play a key role in the formation of province-wide socialist caucuses in the Ontario, Alberta and BC sections.

These caucuses, well under way by 1966, continued to expand on a modest basis for a couple of years until the rise of Waffle for which they prepared valuable groundwork. They played a pioneer role through their struggle against the reformist leadership in legitimatizing caucus formations in the NDP. Through their projection of a rounded alternative socialist program and in the struggle to promote it, they trained cadre and established leading figures on the left.

Our last convention prepared our movement to meet developing Canadian national sentiments which we interpreted as anti-US imperialist, leading to anti-Canadian capitalist and to class consciousness. When this burst into the NDP with the formation of Waffle we were ready to integrate ourselves into it. With the rise and firming up of Waffle as an English-Canadian-wide force, the area of revolutionary propaganda in the NDP has been widened and the NDP has become more attractive to radicalizing youth. But Waffle is as yet to some considerable degree still outside the movement. It has not yet directed

itself into the constituency organizations or towards the established union movement and so does not cause us, at this time at any rate, to make any substantial tactical adjustments in our orientation.

With the class

Our orientation to the NDP, to the labor party, is an orientation to the working class in its process of developing political consciousness. We have been firm and consistent in maintaining this orientation because we have no intention of being cut off or cutting ourselves off from the force that is destined to settle accounts with capitalist rule and establish workers power. For the period that is foreseeable ahead the working class is going to go through that experience. We intend to participate in that experience — fully. No one, nothing is going to stop us. Neither sectarians, nor opportunists—nor the labor lieutenants of the capitalist class nor their direct agents. We intend to be right in there — to expedite that experience and to assure that it moves forward to the forging of the type of instrument necessary to realize the Canadian revolution.

We are flexible in its application because the tempo of the class struggle and the maturing of the workers is vastly uneven; and it is possible — even necessary to take advantage of every opportunity that presents itself right now — to turn the relationship of forces between ourselves and the reformist leadership of the NDP to our advantage. It is necessary to build the cadre now.

(end)

End notes

In the Introduction

NDP – New Democratic Party, formed in 1961 and successor to the CCF

CCF - Cooperative Commonwealth Federation, formed in 1932 as an agrarian-based
Social-democratic party

Socialist League, formed in 1974 in Toronto, ideological successor to the LSA; became
known as the Forward Group in 1977

In "Opposition to Orientation"

Third World Congress since Reunification – 1968; the third congress since the 1963
Re-unification W.C. of the Fourth International, which was founded by Leon
Trotsky in 1938

VMC - Vietnam Mobilization Committee, the anti-war united front in which the LSA
played a leading role in the 1960s

In "Cannot be by-passed"

International Executive Committee (IEC) of the FI – the Fourth International grouping
headed by Michel Pablo, the leading European exponent of entrism *sui generis*.
United Secretariat - Fourth International grouping including the US, Canadian and British
sections in opposition to Pablo's line, dissolved with the reunification of
world Trotskyism in 1963

In ‘‘Concept of Entry’’

Bonapartist state – historical reference to the military regime thrown up in the later stages of the French Revolution straddling the contending forces of the rising bourgeoisie, the monarchist reaction and the revolutionary proletariat, i.e., a period of sustained supra-class “dual power”

In ‘‘Liquidationism’’

The Militant – journal of the U.S. Socialist Workers Party, American section of the F.I. until 1980

Pseudonyms

Grenier: Jean-Marie Bédard

McAlpine: Ken Sutherland

Pablo: Michel Raptis, veteran Greek F.I. leader

Rose: Joe Rosenthal

(Comment for the website edition by the Web Ed. -- 2009)

This document is not only of historical interest, sketching as it does the history of the Trotskyist movement in Canada; it also expresses the most complete development of the Trotskyist orientation to the mass, mainstream independent labor political party in Canada – the only such labor party in North America – the New Democratic Party.

This document outlines the strategy that the Canadian Trotskyist movement tested and refined over 40 years in coming to grips with the challenge posed by the existence of the NDP, which from its birth as the agrarian-based CCF evolved into a mass social-democratic labor-based party, which for historical reasons has been able to position itself as the obligatory first step in the political education and mobilization of the Canadian working class. Thus, Canadian Trotskyists see the mass NDP not only as “in the way,” but also “on the way” to labor’s political development towards establishing socialism in this country – a dialectical concept that also obliges the forces of revolutionary socialism to relate to and participate closely in this party.

By 1948, in the judgement of its author Ross Dowson, the formerly agrarian-based CCF had acquired the decisive support from the Canadian union movement to be recognized as a labor party. Furthermore, with the consolidation of the major Canadian union federations’ support in the “re-branding” of the CCF as the New Democratic Party in 1961, there was henceforth no doubt that the Canadian working class would hereby first pass through the experience of a reformist labor party on the road to workers power in this country.

However, the advantage and opportunity afforded by the existence of this mass-based parliamentarist labor party formation – first the CCF then the NDP – could be realized by a dialectical approach to the question, in recognizing the need for a strategic orientation to this mass formation which would vastly help in legitimizing revolutionary

socialist ideas, particularly as applied with the powerful concept of Trotsky's Transitional Program (1938). This is method of applying concrete demands such as nationalization of industry and resources in the context of plant closings or foreign takeover and control, or of ending Canadian complicity in US aggression throughout the world, or of womens rights to control their lives and bodies through abolition of abortion laws, etc. These transitional demands not only fulfil democratic (i.e., reformist) needs, but in reality they either cannot be fully realized without a socialist revolution nor can even serious reforms leading to partial realization of these demands be initiated without mass mobilization of the class, which is the first requisite of the march towards socialism. Most importantly, the context of raising these transitional demands before the working class within the political arena of the labor party is far more powerful than that of an labor movement reduced to begging for concessions from bourgeois parties.

In fact, the real indirect political influence of this labor party intruder into the hallowed halls of bourgeois Parliament is much greater than the often marginal vote percentage it garners and its under-representation in terms of seats won. The NDP appears a marginal player on the federal plane but in reality this labor party is solidly in the mainstream of Canadian politics, and with the impending victory of the NDP's pressure for electoral reform – proportional representation – and the increasingly likely departure of Quebec from Confederation in a decade or two, the NDPs destiny is clearly to become a major force which will be soon thrust into power in Ottawa. Thus, a key sector of the North American working class will take power in its own name, the first step in the struggle for a socialist North America.

This document outlines this long struggle of Canadian Trotskyists for a mass orientation to the class – in reality, the obligation Canadian revolutionists must come to grips with – as well as its pitfalls and dangers to building the revolutionary vanguard – the central task facing us of rebuilding the revolutionary cadre, as the author saw it.

==J.D., January 2006

LSA on Argentine kidnapping

The following is a statement of the Political Committee of the League for Socialist Action-Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière.

On March 21 the general manager of the Argentine branch of Fiat Concorde was kidnapped by commandos of the ERP (Ejercito Revolucionario del Pueblo — Revolutionary People's Army). Their action has aroused wide attention across the world, including Canada where an action similar in many ways was carried out in October 1970 under the banner of the Front de Liberation du Quebec (FLQ).

The violence in Argentina today clearly originates from the repressive measures carried out against the masses by a dictatorial regime.

Argentina has been under military rule almost continually since 1955. The present military junta of General Alejandro Lanusse has crowded the jails with political prisoners. Union and student militants have been abducted and secretly killed by the police.

A worldwide solidarity campaign is now underway to protest torture and repression in Argentina and to aid its victims.

Under the influence of guerrilla strategies such as those carried out in other parts of Latin America by Che Guevara in Bolivia or the

Tupamaros in Uruguay, many revolutionary militants in Argentina have staked their hopes in dramatic actions by small groups. Such actions, they feel, can spark the masses into moving to overthrow the dictatorship and taking power into their own hands.

Similar thinking motivated the FLQ kidnappings of Pierre Laporte and James Cross in Quebec in October 1970.

Carried out by a handful of persons in the name of the FLQ, the two kidnappings were seen by many in the Quebec left as a spark which would ignite a revolutionary upsurge in Quebec. In the first days following the kidnappings, considerable sympathy was evident for the demand of the FLQ — liberation of political prisoners. But these actions by their very nature sought not the participation or mobilization of the masses but their applause.

The LSA-LSO said at the time that "the FLQ has substituted the isolated actions of a small handful for the mass political action of the working class, the only road for Quebec's liberation."

Reducing the masses to the role of spectators, the kidnappings created the conditions for a massive wave of government repression. Quebec was occupied with 7,000 troops; civil liberties were suspended; over 500 persons were jailed, including

leaders of the LSA-LSO.

It was only after months of concerted cross-country and international campaigns to defend civil liberties and to expose government sedition trials that the mass movement recovered in Quebec. It did so through a series of mass actions around the defense of political prisoners and through independentist demonstrations which expressed the deepening nationalist consciousness of the Quebecois.

This experience has been indeed "exemplary" for the entire left and nationalist movements in Quebec and Canada.

The ERP action, like that of the FLQ supporters in Quebec, reduces the masses to the role of spectators. It avoids the necessary consistent work of bringing the masses into struggles around a program linked to their most urgent economic, social and political needs.

Our recent experience in Quebec convinces us all the more that rather than involving the revolutionary forces in mass struggles, such actions separate the revolutionaries from the masses, thus posing a block on the path to building a revolutionary party. The task in Argentina as in Canada and Quebec is the construction of such a party capable of leading the working class in the struggle for power.

What strategy for a French Quebec In defence of French unilingualism

(From Labor Challenge April 1972)

by Colleen Levis

The following article (originally titled "In defense of nationalism and the struggle for unilingualism") is taken from the French language Trotskyist paper Libération. It answers several attacks on the mass movement in Quebec for a French Quebec — a movement to defend the national language against the present tendency of attrition and destruction.

The (Canadian --ed.) Communist party denounces the movement for a French Quebec, the unilingual movement, as the "battle cry of the French-Canadian petty-bourgeoisie" and accuses it of "dividing the working class according to nationality."

Colleen Levis, the author of this article, is the organizer of the Ligue des Jeunes Socialistes in Montreal which has played a leading role in building the Front Commun pour la Defense de la Langue Française. Levis wrote the article, as she explains, as a reply to Sam Walsh of the Communist party (in Quebec --ed.).

Walsh has since answered Levis' article with yet another diatribe against the Quebec language movement. Walsh spends the whole of this second article in a sterile attempt to fit together six quotes from Lenin, torn out of their literal and historical context, to show that Lenin too would have opposed the demand for French unilingualism. In our next issue Labor Challenge will take up Walsh's distortions of Lenin's position.

The references Levis makes to Bill 63 and Bill 28 may not be understood in English Canada. Bill 63, passed in 1969 by the Quebec government, guaranteed in law the right to school education in either French or English. As predicted by the nationalist movement, the Bill speeded up the process of assimilation into English in Quebec, especially on the part of immigrants.

Bill 28, a law to reform the Montreal school system and to implement Bill 63 in Montreal, was recently withdrawn by the Quebec government after massive protest.

The important decisions on the national question taken at the recent convention of the Quebec Federation of Labor are a part of the leftward turn in the labor movement toward mass struggles. The radicalization of the Quebec workers is shown by a more pronounced nationalism.

Among the organizations of the left only the Communist party of Quebec sees something dangerous and reactionary for the working class in these decisions. In the December 10, 1971 issue of *Combat*, the paper reflecting the viewpoint of the Communist party of Quebec (PCQ), Sam Walsh attacks nationalism and the struggle for French unilingualism.

Discrimination

The position taken by the QFL in favor of French unilingualism, a position put forward for a long time by the Trotskyist movement, is according to Walsh of the PCQ "the other side of me coin of discrimination and coercion. The fact that the Trotskyites have adopted unilingualism as their own demand, a very dangerously nationalist one, is a measure of their opportunism, wanting to make nationalists out of internationalist workers instead of the contrary." It is the Canadian capitalist system and not the Trotskyists which has created Québécois nationalism. In any case for real Marxists there is no contradiction between the nationalism of an oppressed nation and working class internationalism.

In another article in that issue of *Combat*, the PCQ explains its support of Bill 28. It criticizes from the right the amendment of the Parti Québécois which, according to the PCQ, "risk dividing the working class even further..." The Communist party is even more moderate on the language question than the Parti Québécois!

"The struggle for the survival and the growth of the national language of French Canadians must not be waged by denying the English-speaking minority, whatever its ethnic origin, the freedom to use its language and the right to education in the language of its choice."

This is not a statement of the Canadian government to a meeting of anglophones nor a statement of Bourassa. This is a statement of a party which calls itself "communist." In fact, in reading the PCQ solution to what it calls the "delicate linguistic problem," it is very difficult to distinguish it from the solution proposed by the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism.

The article claims that the linguistic policy of the PCQ is "neither bilingualism nor unilingualism," although the PCQ is in favor of Bill 28 just as it was in favor of Bill 63 in 1969. In reality this is a policy which goes completely in the direction of protecting the privileges of the English-speaking population. Rejecting French unilingualism in Quebec can only lead to English unilingualism.

English privileged language

All the studies show a clear tendency towards the total assimilation of the French-speaking Québécois. All the statistics prove that, given free choice, the Anglophones (*English-speakers*), the immigrants and more and more even the Francophones (*French-speakers*), choose English. This is because English is the privileged language in Quebec. It is the language of those who oppress the Quebec nation, that is to say the English-Canadian and American capitalists. Those who do not speak English have limited chances of advancement and most often receive lower wages.

The article in *Combat* cites Lenin in order to justify the rotten policy of the PCQ. What a slander against Lenin and the Russian revolution of 1917! Lenin, like Trotsky, was in 1922 among the most steadfast in affirming that the one hundred national minorities in

Russia needed real self-determination. He took a position against Stalin's policy on the Georgian (*national* --ed.) question.

On December 31, 1922 Lenin wrote, "Internationalism on the part of oppressors or 'great' nations as they are called ... must consist not only of the observance of the formal equality of nations but even in an inequality of the oppressor nation..."

Lenin would have said that for Quebec we should not demand equality for the French language but inequality for the English language in order to restore French to its rightful place.

One cannot speak abstractly of the equality of two unequal languages. English, the dominant language, is based on conquered rights — on the conquest of the Québécois nation — and not on the so-called "acquired rights of the minority." The English language, the language of the majority in North America, has no need of protection. It is the language of the oppressed Québécois nation which must be protected by laws.

Is it the struggle for French unilingualism which divides the workers? The PCQ talks about a false and illusory unity which will disappear with the first offensive of the bourgeoisie. Unity is built in struggle and not by way of compromises. Moralists and pacifists look for policies which will please everyone and will change nothing. All struggles create divisions.

Whether a strike, a campaign for the right to abortion or even a revolution, the result of any struggle is a polarization even among the workers. Is it necessary to end a strike in a factory, if 10 or 15 percent of the workers oppose it, on the pretext that the strike divides the working class? Is it necessary to curb the majority of the class which goes into struggle and subjugate it to the most backward, most privileged or most prejudiced elements?

The language struggle at St. Leonard (*around the question of the language of instruction in a secondary school in a Montreal suburb with a largely Italian immigrant population* --ed.) was not abstract. The PCQ fiercely attacked the Francophones because they had not succeeded in winning the support of all the non-Francophones. The Francophones, according to the PCQ, had to abandon their struggle to defend their language in the name of "unity." There are still a large number of American workers who, against their own interests, support the war in Indochina, even actively. But that does not mean it is not necessary to build the antiwar movement.

Unity

Socialism will not be built with abstract appeals for "unity"; socialism will be built through concrete struggles of the most oppressed sectors of capitalist society.

The PCQ invokes the call for "unity" against the revolutionary dynamic of the mass

struggles in order to hide its Stalinist, counter-revolutionary and passive politics. The Communist party does not develop a program for Quebec which serves the needs of the Québécois, utilizing the method of scientific Marxism, but one which suits above all the interests of the conservative bureaucracy in the USSR.

The Russian revolution has been betrayed by Stalinism. The right of oppressed nations to self-determination has been reversed by the Stalinist degeneration of the USSR. In spite of the warnings of Lenin on this question before his death, the Stalinist course won against the left opposition led by Trotsky and inspired by the traditions of Lenin. In order to maintain their privileged positions, Stalin and his heirs developed a strategy of peaceful coexistence with imperialism, seeking to uphold the status quo.

We see the total lack of solidarity of the USSR with the revolutionary nationalist struggles around the world. Kosygin's visit to Canada and his statements are an example. For him, national oppression exists neither in the USSR nor here. He never breathed so much as a word on the national oppression of the Québécois. He spoke often of Canada as a "nation strong and united."

The "internationalism" which the PCQ speaks about has nothing to do with proletarian internationalism. True internationalists must support unconditionally the just struggles of oppressed nations. It is hypocritical for those who uncritically supported the invasion of Czechoslovakia by the USSR to speak of internationalism. The Québécois workers who are nationalists identify with the struggle against oppression around the world — in Bangladesh, in Ireland, in the United States, the women's struggle, and the struggle in the colonial countries. We can best develop an internationalist consciousness through our own concrete experiences.

Those in Quebec who recognize neither the double oppression of Francophone workers nor the importance of the struggle to defend the national language will hardly be capable of recognizing the necessity of socialism.

The Debate on Canadian unions

The struggle for autonomy

(From Labor Challenge April 1972)

by Ron Haywood (*perhaps a pseudonym for R.D. --web editors*)

Should Canadian workers split from the international unions and strike out on their own with independent "national" unions? Or can they win autonomy — independent policies, full control over structures, and election of all officers within Canada — within the framework of the Internationals?

This long-standing debate in the labor movement is based on two interlocked and interacting — and healthy — sentiments. One is an awareness by Canadian workers of the lack of democratic principles and procedures within their own local and union. It poses the question of who should control the unions — the brass or the rank and file.

The other is a Canadian nationalist sentiment, expressing distrust and repugnance toward American imperialism — its aims and objectives, its mouthpieces like Nixon and its tools like AFL-CIO president George Meany.

In a recent exchange in the *Toronto Star*, Ed Finn, research director of the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway, Transport and General Workers noted that the debate on Canadian union autonomy "is a reflection in miniature of the broader debate now raging over Canada's uncertain future as an independent nation.

"One's point of view," he argued, "depends on whether one is a nationalist or an apologist for the American takeover... If Canadians choose to resist the American engulfment, a self-governing labor movement will have to be one of our top priorities."

Arguing against Finn, Murray Cotterill, Canadian public relations director of the United Steelworkers of America, claimed that Canadian workers can already be independent within the Internationals. "While U.S. unionists have been doggedly supporting their sons in Vietnam, Canadians in the same unions have been condemning the conflict... While U.S. union leaders have been pushing 'free enterprise' and the 'two party' system, Canadian leaders of the same unions ... support a third pro-labor party."

Arguing for conflicting positions, both Finn and Cotterill had to relate their key arguments to the growing nationalist consciousness among Canadian workers. Increasingly, Canadians see the United States as a violent, racist and huckster society. When 60,000 workers in B.C. downed their tools in protest against Nixon's Amchitka nuclear blast last fall they demonstrated the deep-rooted revulsion Canadian workers feel toward the U.S. government and its policies.

Concern about U.S. domination of Canada's economy, educational institutions and cultural life fuel the sentiment and call into question the unique relationship between

Canadian unionists and the U.S.-based international unions to which a majority of organized workers adhere.

Many trade unionists ask why we should tolerate a relationship which permits the American trade union brass to arbitrarily slap trusteeship over dissident Canadian locals or sabotage strikes (as in the recent case of UAW workers at Douglas Aircraft). Why, many ask, should we continue to be identified organizationally with heavy-handed American bureaucrats like Meany, who extols Nixon's policies in Vietnam, boasts of never having walked a picket line, condemns strikes and often supports binding arbitration of labor disputes.

Historically, Canadian and American workers have been linked organizationally, and in common struggles, for more than a century. These links flowed logically out of the logic of the North American market, its domination in both countries by the same big corporations. Moreover, it made sense to Canadian workers to invite the larger and more powerful Internationals in to help organize.

Cotterill notes that Canadians in Internationals have won "higher wages, lower hours and better pensions... in less time, with less personal sacrifice and with lower dues" than they would have unassisted by their U.S. brothers. Would Canadian auto workers presently have wage parity with their U.S. counterparts without the efforts of the International UAW?

The current wave of union organizing among government employees, and in Quebec, had largely bypassed the Internationals, however. While the membership of international unions in Canada increased only 8.7 percent between 1965 and 1970, membership in Canadian unions jumped 163 percent — from 198,000 to 521,000.

Influence declining

But although the numerical influence of the Internationals is declining in the Canadian labor movement, there are some who want to see an end to it altogether. International unions, they claim, can't possibly defend Canadian workers.

Ed Finn, for instance, points to U.S. unions' support of protectionist legislation which could result in a decline in Canadian manufacturing exports to the U.S. and Canadian jobs. "The fact is," he writes, "that the same unions cannot logically or equitably represent workers in two contiguous countries in times of economic stress. Looking at this obvious conflict of interest, Canadian members of international unions must now ask themselves whether the benefits of their U.S. affiliation still outweigh the disadvantages."

Finn is saying that when capitalist states have inter-imperialist conflicts over markets, jobs, etc. — then international solidarity between workers becomes impossible. What he does is identify and tie the interests of workers in different countries with the interests of their capitalist class. Does this mean that the brass of the Canadian Labor Congress should now opt for Canadian protectionist policies? Should Canadian workers get caught

up in a "buy Canadian first" campaign? Who are our allies — Canadian capitalists or American workers?

Workers have no interest in supporting "their" government in time of either economic stress or boom. Rather, workers' interests lie in international class solidarity and the forging of effective fighting instruments to defend and advance their common cause. This unity can be forged either through national unions or international unions.

Bureaucracy

The obstacle to real **internationalism** — and this is the question both Finn and Cotterill duck — is the narrow and class-collaborationist viewpoint of the bureaucrats who control the apparatus of both "national" and "international" unions and who identify with the interests of their national state. Suspended between the ranks and the boss, the privileged bureaucrats with their fat paycheques reject a strategy of mobilizing workers in class struggle against the corporations and the capitalist state in favor of efforts to mediate and channel the disputes that arise through skillful backroom negotiations. Pressure from the ranks to make the unions more democratic and combative instruments of the class struggle is balanced against pressure from the capitalist state to co-opt the unions.

Leon Trotsky wrote more than 30 years ago of the tendency of the unions to "grow together" with the state apparatus. It is still true today that "the labor bureaucrats do their level best in words and deeds to demonstrate to the 'democratic' state how reliable and indispensable they are in peacetime and especially in time of war."

Witness Meany's support of the war in Vietnam and CLC president MacDonald's sharp attacks on Quebec nationalism.

<!-- =====BEGIN BOX===== -->

Photo caption: DOUGLAS AIRCRAFT WORKERS on strike last fall against the U.S.-based company's attempt to keep their wages in line with Nixon's wage controls. When local rejected proposed settlement, International UWA forced an end to strike by cutting off strike benefits.

<!-- =====END BOX === -->

Lacking a clear understanding of the nature of the labor bureaucracy, some partisans of uniquely Canadian unions have been guilty of the very class collaborationist policies that rank-and-file militants are trying to escape in supporting a break from the bureaucratic Internationals. Many of the same voices which are raised in indignant protest when an international union imposes trusteeship on a Canadian local were mute when the federal government imposed trusteeship over the Seafarers International Union in 1963.

Prominent elements in the business and political establishment, such as the *Toronto Star*, the pro-capitalist Committee for an Independent Canada, and former Finance

minister Walter Gordon, also call for independent Canadian unions. There is even a small body of dissident trade unionists, grouped in the Canadian Council of Unions, which has made a principle and vocation out of attempting to break Canadian workers from the Internationals and establish all-Canadian unions.

Many of these elements argue as if the international unions had ceased to be workers' organizations, and were now akin to the imperialist corporations that plunder Canadian resources and labor. They have been aided in this by the Canadian government, which annually, through the Corporations and Labor Unions Returns Act (CALURA), amasses figures designed to show that unions, like corporations, are responsible for a net outflow of funds to the United States.

Are unions 'imperialist'?

CALURA figures are incomplete and distort the relationship between Canadian and American workers by depicting it in simple cash terms.

In any case, what is wrong with Canadian workers' dues going to the U.S.? When the International Woodworkers of America (IWA) launched an organizing drive in U.S. southern states they used some dues from Canadian woodworkers. That drive organized workers and blocked an employer move to non-union runaway shops. Should Canadian IWA members object?

What is crucial is union democracy, which will enable the rank and file to make the unions into militant instruments of class struggle. Workers must have the right to determine which union will represent them — and further, the leadership, the policies and the structure of that union.

Under the pressure of this nationalist and democratic sentiment, the 1970 convention of the Canadian Labor Congress which speaks for the vast bulk of the Internationals in Canada, adopted far-reaching proposals for autonomy. These called for election of Canadian officers by Canadians, policies on Canadian affairs to be decided by elected Canadian officers or by the Canadian membership, and urged international unions to amend their constitutions where they forbid their Canadian affiliates from taking part in partisan politics.

In addition, a reform caucus of delegates at the convention had put forward such proposals as Canadian offices, Canadian policy conferences, provision of more services in Canada, an end to head office vetoes on collective agreements negotiated in Canada and the right for Canadian affiliates to merge with other unions in Canada without having to wait for the parent unions to merge in the United States.

Indications are that more Canadian workers will push for autonomy — in or outside the Internationals. The Newspaper Guild is currently conducting hearings to determine whether to establish a Canadian national office. And recently postal and telephone workers in Canadian unions signed a "mutual assistance pact" with the 4,000-member

Canadian Communication Workers Council, an AFL-CIO affiliate.

A struggle for autonomy and union democracy will coincide with the development, within the U.S., of a struggle by rank and file militants for union democracy and a class struggle strategy. Links of international solidarity between Canadian and American workers will strengthen us both.

Oct. 7, 1972 LSA-LSO elects new exec. secretary

by GARY PORTER

Revolutionary socialists from across Canada met in Toronto September 2-4 in a plenary conference of the Central Committee of the League for Socialist Action-Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière (LSA-LSO).

The conference, bringing together leaders of the Canadian Trotskyist movement from Quebec and five provinces, worked out action plans for the coming months and prepared for a convention to be held in January.

Three days of intensive discussion were concluded with the election of a new executive secretary. Ross Dowson, executive secretary of the Canadian Trotskyist movement for 28 years, stood aside from the post and nominated John Riddell as the new executive secretary. Ross Dowson was chosen as cross-Canada chairman of the LSA-LSO.

The conference opened with a report on the international situation by Arthur Young. Explaining the gravity of Moscow and Peking's betrayal of the Vietnamese

revolution, he underlined the urgency of building a mass movement to support the Vietnamese struggle for self-determination by demanding immediate U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam. Young reported on the growth of the Fourth International, the world party of socialist revolution founded by Leon Trotsky in 1938, and on the important discussion now underway in its ranks.

Gary Porter, organizational secretary of the LSA-LSO, outlined the League's plans for intervention in a wide range of campaigns over the coming months. His report reflected the LSA-LSO's growing strength and influence in a range of movements for social change. In addition to stressing the importance of the antiwar movement, he outlined campaigns to build actions for women's liberation, for the rights of the French language in Quebec, and to support the growing left caucus formations in the NDP. He also projected an ambitious drive to increase circulation of socialist periodicals and publications across the country in the fall period.

The election of John Riddell as executive secretary of the LSA-LSO is an important step in the process of a new generation assuming central responsibility for the leadership of the Canadian Trotskyist movement.

The LSA-LSO has grown rapidly since the early 1960s, and particularly in the past five years, building its ranks with recruits from the rising wave of a new radicalization in English Canada and Quebec.

After a lengthy period of reaction in which revolutionary socialists could do little more than preserve their cadres and program, and make

slow and painful gains, a new generation of revolutionaries began to emerge, seeking to link up with the historic program of Marxism incorporated today in the Trotskyist movement.

Substantial reinforcements came to the LSA-LSO, eager to learn from the experience and knowledge of past generations of revolutionaries, as contained in the program and cadres of the Trotskyist movement. With the growing incorporation of these forces in the LSA-LSO's leadership, a transition of leadership began, to a new generation.

John Riddell, the new executive secretary, joined the LSA-LSO in 1961, when this radicalization was in its preparatory stage. He played a leading role in the early '60s in organizing the student antiwar movement, in working in the student New Democratic Party, and promoting the defense of the Cuban revolution.

In 1965 he was elected executive secretary of the Young Socialists, the Canadian Trotskyist youth movement, and the following year he was their candidate for election to the Toronto board of education. In 1969 he was the League for Socialist Action's candidate for mayor of Toronto. The following year he became editor of Labor Challenge.

Ross Dowson's role as chairman is indicative of the continuity in the LSA-LSO's leadership, a continuity extending back 40 years to the inception of the Canadian Trotskyist movement, continuing the struggle initiated by the founding of the Canadian Communist party in 1921.



JOHN RIDDELL. Newly-elected executive-secretary of LSA-LSO was Toronto mayoralty candidate in 1969.

For thirty years of this 40 year history, Ross Dowson has played the central leadership role in the Canadian Trotskyist movement. Coming to Trotskyism in the '30s, he led the Trotskyists in regrouping and reorganizing after they were driven underground because of their opposition to the imperialist Second World War.

Dowson was several times candidate in municipal and federal elections, winning 23,000 votes as Trotskyist candidate for mayor of Toronto at the peak of the postwar labor upsurge.

Executive secretary of the Trotskyist organization since 1944, he led it in resisting the years of McCarthyite witchhunt and reac-

tion, and in regearing to take advantage of the new opportunities presented by the launching of the NDP and by the youth radicalization which opened up in the 1960s.

As chairman, Ross Dowson will continue to play a key role in the central leadership of the LSA-LSO.

The conference concluded by projecting a cross-Canada convention for the month of January, a convention which will conclude an extended period of internal discussion, register the LSA-LSO's gains both in its major campaigns and in the strengthening of its leadership, and decide on the political questions governing its work over the coming period.

Behind the coup in Chile

- Lessons of the coup
- The nature of Allende's government
- Where Canadian CP goes wrong

Lessons of the coup

The right-wing military junta that has seized power in Chile is ruthlessly hunting down its political opponents. Worker and peasant militants and refugees from the prisons and torture chambers of all the military regimes in Latin America are being rounded up.

One of the greatest gains of the mass movement in Chile was the establishment of that country as a refuge for the persecuted. Exiles from all over Latin America sought and received political asylum in Chile as a result of these gains.

The attempt to turn these exiles over to the butchers and torturers they have escaped from, and to inflict a bloody defeat on the workers' movement in Chile, must not go unanswered. The League for Socialist Action calls for united protest actions against the suppression of democratic rights in Chile, against the victimization of political refugees and Chilean militants.

Such protests should take place in all parts of Canada. A vocal protest in Canada, combined with the protests taking place in Latin America, the U.S., and around the world, can make a significant impact on the treatment of those now being arrested. We urge all supporters of democratic rights to join in and help build these actions.

LEARN THE

LESSONS OF DEFEAT!

Along with defending the victims of the reactionary coup, we must learn the lessons it teaches. Not to do so would be to invite new defeats in the future.

Allende came to power during a social crisis and mass upsurge that led to a pre-revolutionary situation in Chile. The Socialist and Communist party leaders argued that it was possible to attain socialism by gradual stages in a bloc with

"nationalist" sectors of the Chilean bourgeoisie. They claimed that the electoral victory of Allende proved that an essentially peaceful, electoral road to socialism was possible.

This was a direct denial of the Marxist-Leninist concept that the workers cannot establish socialism without replacing the state apparatus of capitalism with their own apparatus. Workers can achieve this only through a struggle against the capitalist class, both native and foreign. Participation in bourgeois elections can serve

only as an adjunct to mass extraparliamentary struggles under the leadership of a revolutionary party.

Marx and Engels believed that the army and police, along with the capitalist state apparatus as a whole, were instruments of capitalist rule. Marx wrote in 1871 that the task of the revolution is not "to transfer the bureaucratic-military machine from one hand to another, but to smash it." (Emphasis in original)

One hundred years later, in 1971, Allende said: "I have ab-

solute confidence in the loyalty of the armed forces. "Our forces are professional forces at the service of the state, the people

" (New York Times, March 28, 1971).

Marx hailed the fact that "the first decree of the (Paris) Commune . . . was the suppression of the standing army, and the substitution for it of the armed people

But Luis Corvalan, general secretary of the Chilean Communist Party, declared in 1970 that the CP opposed proposals to arm the people as being

The socialist alternative

Young Socialists

League for Socialist Action



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ivalent to showing distrust of the army." The army, he aimed, "is not invulnerable to the new winds blowing in Latin America and penetrating everywhere."

ROLE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTIES AROUND THE WORLD

The Communist parties throughout the world hailed Chile as a shining example of the correct road to socialism — as did the capitalist pundits who praised Allende's "moderation" and "commitment to democracy."

The April 28, 1971 New York Times reported that the Soviet Communist Party's specialist on developing countries, Rostislav A. Ulyanovsky, called on colonial and semi-colonial countries to follow Chile's example.

Canadian Communist Party

Leader William Kashtan hailed events in Chile as "a democratic revolution paving the way for socialism." (Canadian Tribune, Jan. 26, 1972) Young Communist League Chairman John Bizzell reassured those who were concerned about the role of the armed forces: "The army has agreed to respect the Constitution and the electoral decision of the people in electing the Popular Unity . . . the army has remained loyal and increasingly so." (Canadian Tribune, Oct. 13, 1971)

The experience of Chile proves that the Marxist analysis of the state and the need for social revolution is correct. It also proves once again that this perspective has been abandoned by the reformist Communist and Social Democratic parties the world over. These parties everywhere are Judas goats,

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whose main function is to lead the masses to slaughter.

BUILD REVOLUTIONARY PARTIES!

In Chile, large numbers of workers and peasants understood the importance of arming themselves against a right-wing coup. But although Allende warned of a coup, he and his Communist Party allies refused to arm the masses. Tragically, there was no mass revolutionary party willing and able to lead the masses in preparing their own defense.

Except for the small Trotskyist nucleus in Chile, every left group politically supported Allende's popular front, with varying degrees of criticism. Since none of them were willing to repudiate the regime, none were capable of leading in the only action that

could have prevented the coup and ensured further revolutionary gains for the Chilean people.

Chile underlines once again the need build mass revolutionary parties in every country, parties which can lead the masses against capitalist oppression, parties which will not yield an inch to the reformism of the "Communists" and Social Democrats.

The League for Socialist Action and Young Socialists in Canada, and the parties and organizations of the Fourth International elsewhere in the world, were alone in analysing the true nature of the Allende regime and explaining the dangers facing the Chilean masses. It is the construction of revolutionary parties based on their program that can prevent such defeats in the future.

Fourth International warned of confrontation

The nature of Allende's government

[The following resolution was passed unanimously by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International at the end of December 1971.]

* * *

Organize Democratic Councils of the Workers, Peasants, Slum Dwellers, and Students!

Struggle for the Arming of the Proletariat and the Formation of a Popular Militia!

Build a Revolutionary Party!

Fourteen months ago, as a result of the September 4, 1970, elections and an agreement between the parties of the Unidad Popular (Popular Unity)* and the Partido Demócrata-Cristiano (Christian Democrats), Salvador Allende was inaugurated as president of Chile and formed a popular front government. This was a major event that all formations both within the country and in the Americas as a whole had to take a stand on. From the beginning it served as a touchstone, revealing the concepts and attitudes of the various currents in the workers' movement. The experiment in Chile is being watched throughout the world, particularly as a test of the efficacy of the electoral, parliamentary, and peaceful road that has been advocated by the reformists as a way of achieving socialism.

In a setting of vigorous mobilizations of opposing social and political forces, the crisis in Chile is becoming increasingly acute. Particularly since the defeat suffered by the masses of Bolivia last August, the contradictions and the struggle in Latin America have come to a focal point in Chile. Thus it is imperative for revolutionary Marxists to grasp the nature of the events, to understand the tendencies that are developing and the issues that are coming to the fore, and to define their position without any ambiguity so as to be able to intervene effectively.

1. The victory of the Cuban revolution — which coincided with the irreversible crisis of the bourgeois or petty-bourgeois revolutionary nationalist movements that marked an entire stage of the political struggle in many Latin American countries — led U.S. imperialism and the indigenous ruling classes to reexamine where they stood. On the one hand, the imperialists stepped up their military preparations, with an eye to the possible danger of revolutionary struggles inspired by the Cuban example; on the other hand, they projected a reformist course the aim of which was to reinforce certain economic sectors considered to be the most dynamic, to favor a shift in the relationship of forces within the ruling classes toward the "new" bourgeois layers, and to broaden, even if but a little, the mass base of the system. This attempt — to which Washington, however, allotted only derisory funds under the so-called Alliance for Progress — ended in total defeat. Within this context, the reformist experiments, or those tending in that direction (for example, Goulart in Brazil, Belaúnde in Peru) were either crushed

* The Partido Social-Demócrata, Acción Popular Independiente, Movimiento de Acción Popular Unitaria, Partido Radical, Partido Comunista, and Partido Socialista.

Where Canadian CP goes wrong

by JON COLE

One of the most important aspects of the Marxist theory of revolution is its view of the role and nature of the state. Both Marx and Lenin placed great stress on the fact that the state in a capitalist country is not a neutral arbiter, above society, not an empty flask which could be filled with socialist content, but an instrument of capitalism, inseparable from it. The task of the revolution, Marx wrote is not "to transfer the bureaucratic-military regime from one hand to another, but to smash it...." (Letter to Kugelmann, April 12, 1871).

Lenin, commenting on this passage, said "The words 'to smash the bureaucratic-military machine,' briefly express the principal lesson of Marxism regarding the tasks of the proletariat during a revolution in relation to the state...." (*The State and Revolution*).

It was precisely this "principal lesson of Marxism" that was denied by the Chilean Communist Party and Salvador Allende with their claim that in Chile capitalism could be reformed out of existence, using capitalism's state, and with the support of capitalism's armed forces. They were supported in this gross abandonment of Marxism by the pro-Moscow Communist parties of the world — including the Communist Party of Canada.

Former Young Communist League chairman and leading CP spokesman John Bizzell visited Chile in 1971, reporting back that "Chile has taken a brave step into the future, and as it embarks on the road to socialism it deserves from its friends around the world every bit of support we can muster." (*Canadian Tribune*, Oct. 13, 1971)

Bizzell reassured those who were concerned that Allende had promised not to interfere with the army: "The army has agreed to respect the Constitution and the electoral decision of the people in electing the Popular Unity. In spite of attempts by the right wing to provoke conflict in the land, the army has remained loyal and increasingly so."

This may or may not be true—and we can leave aside the fact that the middle classes proved to be no supporters of Allende's government. Bizzell entirely leaves out the fact that the army, regardless of the origins of its members, is an instrument of capitalist class rule. It is a

fundamental part of the oppressive state apparatus, and as such was and is a bloc to the revolution.

But for Bizzell such problems do not exist. Elsewhere in his article he blithely wrote: "The pinnacles of the economy have been taken over by the state (read the people)."

But the state is NOT "the people." Every work of Marxism-Leninism since 1871 agrees on this. "The state is an organ of class rule, an organ for the oppression of one class by another" wrote Lenin. The election of Popular Unity did not change one iota the nature of the Chilean state as an instrument of the capitalist class.

The Canadian CP's purely reformist view of Chilean reality was confirmed in an article by Bizzell and Claude Demers in the November-December 1971 Communist Viewpoint. Here they wrote that the election of Popular Unity "set Chile on course to a socialist future."

But this article tried to be a little more scientific. The Popular Unity government "is not a socialist political form at this stage. On the basis of the past and recent history the possibility now exists for the construction of socialism within the new democratic system." And further on: "The class character of the state is not yet the 'dictatorship of the proletariat,' although some of the social, political, and economic features characteristic of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' are present and maturing."

In other words, it is possible to establish the "dictatorship of the proletariat" — that is, to replace the capitalist state with a workers' state — by gradual reforms. This, they argued, was true in Chile in part because "the class background of the military, the attention to the physical material needs of its members and the performance to date of the armed forces in the face of severe provocations by the ultra-right is a fair guarantee of its continued respect for the constitutional integrity of Chile."

The eagerness of the Canadian CP leadership to endorse "the Chilean road" can be easily explained. The Popular Unity was the Chilean experiment in what has been a consistent Communist party program since the 1930s — popular frontism.

The term "popular front" was

developed because it sounded like the Leninist concept of the united front. In fact, the Stalinists often use the terms interchangeably. But the united front called for by Lenin was an action front of workers parties to initiate mass action for the specific needs of the working class. For example, while continuing to disagree on other questions, various political currents in the working class can form a united front for defense of workers' meetings against fascist attacks. Or, as has been done in recent years, a united front in support of the Vietnamese peoples' right to self-determination.

A popular front, on the other hand, is an electoral alliance of working class parties with an allegedly "progressive" wing of the bourgeoisie. This was the course of the Chilean Popular Unity, which included six parties, four of which were not workers' parties. Such a front is built on a least common denominator program — a program that, whatever reforms it may propose, does not transgress capitalist property relations.

No matter how you stretch it, no sector of the capitalist class is in favor of socialism. The popular front inevitably means that the working class parties in the front abandon even the pretext of mobilizing the masses independently in struggles that can lead forward to socialism. It is a means of lulling the working class into inactivity. In country after country — Spain, Indonesia, Guatemala, Greece — the popular front policy has led directly to a military dictatorship, and the brutal smashing of the workers movement.

The Kremlin does not want revolutions — in Canada, Chile, or anywhere else. It wants "peaceful coexistence" — a world detente in which no one rocks the boat and the bureaucrats in Moscow are left alone. The Popular Front policy of alliance with the national bourgeoisie is just an expression on a national level of the Kremlin's policy of detente on an international level. The Chilean CP was simply acting in the interests of Moscow's foreign policy.

The leaders of the Canadian Communist party also follow Moscow's lead faithfully. Their views on Chile confirm once again that there is nothing Marxist or revolutionary about Canadian Stalinism.

— Labor Challenge

THE SUBVERSION OF THE REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST ORIENTATION TO THE N.D.P.



a summary document of the
struggle against it – Jan. 1974

The Subversion of the Revolutionary Socialist Orientation to the NDP

(Inside front cover introduction –ed.)

How do the as yet relatively small revolutionary socialist forces see themselves being transformed into a vanguard party that could give leadership to the Canadian working class in their struggle to establish a socialist society?

How the Trotskyists see this process over the next period is outlined in the document Our Orientation to the NDP - the Strategy and its Tactical Application (published in pamphlet form as “The Socialist Vanguard and the NDP” and appearing on this website –ed.), which was adopted unanimously by their political committee and endorsed without dissent by their united forces in convention in 1970. This document projects the theory, and some historical experiences spanning more than 30 years, which sustain it.

However, just a short two years following its adoption, as the youth radicalization ebbed, this position came under sharp attack. Forces which had only recently come into the movement were soon joined by leaders of the Fourth International who launched a factional attack on the Canadian affiliate.

This attack knocked the majority of the leadership of the united Trotskyist movement off its base. After first ignoring the arguments of their opponents they soon fell into a whole series of shamefaced adaptations and capitulations to their pressure, so that behind the back of the movement and in a series of articles appearing in its public press they violated its longstanding practices.

When these adaptations so emboldened the opposition that a formal stand had to be taken, the majority leadership attempted to short circuit the opposition's attacks by retreating to a gross misinterpretation of established positions.

The document that follows is the summary contribution to this living process by a group of leading activists as they attempted to defend this established position of the movement and who subsequently formed the core of the Socialist League and the contributors to the monthly FORWARD.

While it suffers to some extent from the circumstances of its presentation the following document has the great merit of defending the position outlined in Our Orientation to the NDP - the Strategy and its Tactical Application, in a whole series of very real and concrete circumstances.

THE SUBVERSION OF OUR ORIENTATION TO THE NDP

Submission to the LSA/LSO plenum by the Labor Party Tendency (LPT), January 1974

INTRODUCTION

The Labor Party Tendency has been formed to defend the longstanding orientation of the Canadian Trotskyist movement to the mass labor party formation — the NDP (New Democratic Party).

As our 1970 document noted, the "NDP is the touchstone of class politics. All working-class politics revolve around it and an incorrect position on it is fatal." Furthermore, it pointed out, our "orientation and its effective application has been the hardest fought position in the history of the movement, established against trends of centrist conciliationism and liquidationism into the NDP, sectarian opposition to the party, and in more recent years spontaneous and adventurist hostility to it, leading to defection from the revolutionary vanguard itself."

Especially in the short period since our 1970 convention, the longstanding Trotskyist concept of the nature and role of the NDP in Canadian politics has come into its own — with the election of three provincial NDP governments. There is the possibility in the next election of an NDP government in Ontario. What we saw in the youth radicalization is now fusing with and growing in the working class itself. The groundswell of the radicalization has focused attention on the federal NDP as never before.

At the same time, however, the LSA-LSO's orientation is being challenged as never before.

As the NDP appears to be approaching political office on an expanding front, essentially two contradictory processes have begun to work. The electoralist opportunism of the liberal reformist leadership is becoming more obvious to the broader layers of the radicalization. Nevertheless its very successes, and even more, the anticipations of its successes, in a period of relative economic and social stability, have been tending to dull the political perception of the activist layers around the NDP, tending to lead to various forms of acquiescence and abstentionism. As the NDP and its widening periphery becomes more caught up in electoralism and "real" politics - concepts of being part of a wider and more profoundly radical dynamic and process of social change, which the LSA/LSO projects in its orientation, have tended temporarily to be considered to be less relevant within the NDP itself.

While the revolutionary left continues to grow, its rate of growth in relation to the whole radicalization has temporarily declined. Relatively it has become more isolated and become more prone to ultra leftist illusions. Our opponents on the left, the ultra left

Canadian Party of Labor, the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist Leninist), and even the Communist Party of Canada, have stepped up and widened their opposition to the NDP. Important forces of the radicalization, which in 1970 were either in the NDP - coalescing in the Waffle - or orienting to it, have pulled out of the NDP. In the process of defining themselves they have been taking an ultra left stance to the NDP. We now have the Revolutionary Marxist Group, with cross-Canada connections and claiming to be Trotskyist. The RMG has adopted, as one of its distinguishing features in its relations to the LSA/LSO, a sectarian opposition to the NDP. Part of the forces that formed the RMG came to that group after an all-out assault on our orientation within our movement. Prior to splitting from us they were aided and abetted in this assault by the IEC Majority Tendency (*Footnote: International Executive Committee Majority Tendency in the Fourth International -- the group representing the positions championed by Ernest Mandel, Livio Maitan, & Pierre Frank.*) Instead of opening doors for us, our (*abandoned*) orientation to the NDP is barring us from the radical left as never before, presenting more challenges and making it more difficult for us to have an impact on it.

But perhaps even more important for us to consider is what our comrades and periphery could have expected from our long and patient NDP work — particularly over the last four years in and around the Waffle (*the large left-nationalist tendency that burst upon the NDP in 1969-70—ed.*). The fact is that the largest left formation to have developed in some 25 years of the Canadian labor party blew up in our faces over the spring and fall of 1972. We proved unable to add any substantial forces to our movement in the course of the Waffle experience as we would have the right to expect.

This long anticipated development of a left wing in the labor party should have provided us with an opportunity for and actually resulted in some growth. If it didn't, for a period we would have expected it to sustain class struggle socialist currents in the labor party. These currents, on the basis of further experience, we would have hoped to win to our orientation and organization.

The Waffle defection did violence to all that we could have expected from our orientation. It has substantially changed the climate in the NDP to the disfavor of left ideas and formations —probably for some time to come. The Waffle did not come in our direction or open up new, if different, possibilities for us. Instead, it is in the process of forming a new party. The exact character of this party is not yet definable, but it is of some socialist or centrist type. It will have considerable dynamic for a whole period because of its line for an independent and socialist Canada.

Among our comrades, ideas and feelings that there is something wrong with our orientation, or our ability to implement it could not help but arise. Because we are serious revolutionaries concerned about building the revolutionary vanguard party, we expect results from our analysis and our work.

NDP ORIENTATION UNDER INTERNAL ATTACK

Moreover the LSA has been going through an intense internal struggle with forces that are challenging our orientation to the NDP. In fact looking back, while problems of the revolution in other areas of the globe have been in the forefront of contention, insofar as differences directly involving Canadian politics and LSA positions are concerned, opposition to our NDP orientation has been uppermost. This opposition within our movement developed in two stages. The first was the Offley-Davis group (*footnote*: LSA leaders in Nova Scotia, who subsequently became leaders in the RMG) which subsequently fused with the Mill group (*footnote*: Michel Mill, long-time former member of LSA/LSO, particularly in Quebec.) This was the Unified Minority Tendency from which the Mill group later withdrew to form the Groupe Marxiste Révolutionnaire. At a later stage the UMT merged into the Revolutionary Communist Tendency, joined in turn by the Horbatiuk-Sinclair-Gandall current.

At the same time, and subsequent to the Waffle-MISC (*footnote*: Movement for an Independent and Socialist Canada, the name adopted by Waffle upon leaving the NDP) pull-out from the NDP, the Red Circle formed and moved in our direction. We had running contact with this group in the NDP. They were adopting a hardening critical rejection of the NDP and were calling for an explicitly revolutionary caucus in its ranks. Later they became a component of the RMG. They were joined by the RCT faction when it split from our movement.

The record shows, with considerable clarity, that the central aspect of the disagreement with the UMT/ RCT, **that the major point of difference directly relevant to the Canadian scene, was our NDP orientation.** The record also shows the specific areas of these disagreements. The RCT, Red Circle, Old Mole, and GMR, are now united in the RMG. Differences on the NDP orientation, hitherto limited to our movement and periphery, will now tend to become part of a public debate as the RMG is called upon to explain its existence separate from the LSA/LSO.

These differences have also been projected in the international dispute in the Fourth International. This was signalled by the appearance of the document by Germain (Ernest Mandel) called "In defence of Leninism: in defense of the Fourth International." The general line of this document forms part of the platform of the IEC Majority Tendency. It is an attempted rebuttal of the Lenin-Trotsky Faction's (*footnote*: Lenin-Trotsky Faction is a current associated with the Fourth International headed by Joseph Hansen and the U.S. Socialist Workers Party) claims that the IEC majority is adapting to ultra-left pressures in the new radicalization, (*also*) with a counter charge that the LTF is adapting to rightist pressures. In this counter-charge the LSA and its orientation to the NDP is being used as a foil. This document (*by Germain*) makes a sweeping attack on the LSA/LSO, charging, among other things that "... the position which the LSA-LSO . . .

has adopted towards the reformist social democratic party, the NDP . . . expresses a clear tailist (*adaptationist, subservient —ed.*) deviation from Leninism."

Up until recently we can say that our movement has stood on the document titled *Our Orientation to the NDP; the Strategy and its Tactical Application*. Although there have been many documents on the CCF/NDP, submitted, argued over, and voted upon by various LSA-LSO conventions and plenums - this document is the broadest and most general statement of our view. It was prepared by R. Dowson, and presented to the 1970 convention in the name of the Political Committee. It was adopted by the PC without any dissent, and enthusiastically and unanimously accepted by the convention. This was when the radicalization was already moving into the NDP, as we had predicted it would. This document was understood to not only stand on the diverse work of the past, but to have pulled it all together.

Among the many discussion bulletins circulated for that convention was a special bulletin issued by the LSA-LSO central office. It contained all the major documents on the CCF-NDP that had been adopted by our movement, along with extensive reproductions of key articles from our press. Together these showed the development of our views, which we all considered to culminate in the 1970 document.

Our Orientation to the NDP; the Strategy and its Tactical Application was not put to a vote of the convention. Although we all considered it the definitive general statement of our orientation, it also contained a history of this orientation's development spanning some three decades. We decided it was not advisable to ask many new and youthful delegates, who could not be familiar with this history, to vote on a document that contained such an amount of historical interpretation. **Nevertheless – just three years ago – the 1970 convention delegates and the elected leadership considered this document to be the key statement on our orientation.**

It was in this light that the PC submitted it as a contribution to the current international discussion. We were confident that our Canadian experience in dealing with a mass labor party formation would be of value to the world movement. It would be of special value, in our opinion, to any discussion of "entry sui generis" (*footnote:* tactic of entry put forward by Michel Pablo in the early 1950's when he was executive-secretary of the Fourth International.)

THE FIRST ATTACK

The first episode in the current dispute in our movement did not take place over the orientation itself as outlined in the 1970 document. It was over its application by Dowson, and *Labor Challenge* (the journal of the LSA). It was initiated by the UMT around the controversy that flared up in the New Brunswick NDP.

"The N.B. left, which the Young Socialists have come close to having hegemony over, crumbled," declared Walter Davis in a contribution appearing in Bulletin 26 (Nov. 15/72). The defeat of our movement and its orientation, according to these comrades was "a result of the *Labor Challenge* and Dowson's tailism."

"The 1971 repression of the N. B. Waffle," Davis wrote, "was led by the united forces of Lewis (leader of the NDP), Watkins (leader of the Waffle)" and Dowson (executive secretary of the LSA/LSO). The first two stand historically convicted of crimes against the revolution. The last (Dowson) must answer in the future . . . "

Davis also linked "tailism" in N.B. with the LSA's policy toward the Ontario Waffle in the fall of 1972. "The tailism of the leadership caused the LSA to miss important opportunities for adding to the forces of Trotskyism in Canada. How many times will this be the case?" Next the RCT presented a worked-out position in opposition to our orientation to the NDP in "The Revolutionary Communist Tendency Position on the NDP." This was submitted by Bret Smiley (Dec. 1/72)

In the opening paragraph we read, "It is characteristic of the eclecticism and pragmatism that substitutes for Marxism in the Canadian section that its quarter century genuflection at the altar of the 'labor party' has yet to be substantiated by a single serious attempt to analyse the main features of the social democratic formation in Canada. It therefore should come as no surprise that, given this theoretical vacuum, the most visible manifestation of the LSA's departure from Leninism politically can be detected in its line and practice with respect to the NDP."

Thus the RCT emphasized as the crucial issue at dispute, our NDP orientation. With this contribution it was not the application of the orientation but the orientation itself. And not accidentally, the RCT focused its attack on the 1970 document.

The next sentence quotes from the 1970 document, with minor additions by Bret Smiley. "The orientation to the CCF-NDP (Canadian Section of the Second International - Smiley) has been the fundamental orientation of Canadian Trotskyism since World War II. In general our position has been one of **unconditional** (highlighted by Smiley) support . . ." (*to the NDP –ed.*) He continues on as if the fatal errors in this quotation are self-evident. He asks, "How did this capitulation to reformism come about? After all, the LSA sees itself as a revolutionary organization and at one time acted like one . . . "

After this material appeared, more appeared on the same theme (Bulletin 29) . This was by two leading spokesmen of the RCT, B. Smiley and W. Davis. It was titled Social Democracy and the LSA. This too focused in on the 1970 document. It attacked certain formulations which up until then we had all agreed most succinctly expressed the essence of our orientation. Of necessity, to attack the essence of our orientation, they had to attack the key formulations that expressed that orientation.

This contribution tries to trace what it calls ". . . the degeneration of the LSA . . . back to the section's adaptation to the social democratic party which, as the leadership is fond of repeating, constitutes 'the focus of our politics'."

Space and time limits us. We will note the subheads of this document to give an idea of its contents and the areas of disagreement.

Section One is titled "'Labor Party' or 'Social Democracy'." It notes the ". . . seeming absence of 'social democracy' from the political vocabulary of the Canadian section." They conclude: "To call it (the NDP) anything else is pure opportunism at the theoretical level which we shall see is the essential precondition for the LSA's revisionism politically."

Our movement, its leading spokespersons and its press, have consistently argued against labelling the CCF/NDP social democratic. This flows from our conclusion that, by 1948, the CCF had become a labor party. In a major policy statement, *The CCF, Our Tasks and Perspectives* (*footnote*: This document was re-issued in 1970 as a key part of the discussion) dated July, 1951, we said: "It is no longer permissible for comrades to attempt to estimate the CCF and let themselves, and the party (we called ourselves the Revolutionary Workers Party at that time) be guided by ready-made formulae such as 'social democratic,' 'reformism,' 'political support of the bourgeoisie,' etc."

There followed on extensive quotation from a letter by Leon Trotsky to our French comrades as to whether these definitions were correct when applied to the French Socialist party in 1934. "Both yes and no," replied Trotsky. "Rather no than yes . . . the impossibility of applying henceforth a simple customary definition is of itself the unmistakable expression of the fact that we have to do with a centrist party, which as a consequence of the rapid evolution of the country still retains at its two poles the sharpest contradictions. One would have to be a hopeless scholastic in order to be prevented by the label Second International from seeing what is actually taking place. Only a dialectical definition of the Socialist Party, i.e., above all a concrete appraisal of its internal dynamics can give the Bolshevik-Leninist the possibility of drawing up a correct perspective and of adopting an active, not a waiting policy."

Following another extensive and relevant statement by Trotsky we continued: "Programmatically the CCF is a right wing Social Democratic (reformist) movement moving further to the right with an internal regime that has become less democratic in the past year. But its definition doesn't stop there. It only begins. Our definition must be dialectical. 'A concrete appraisal of its internal dynamics' must be made. Such a definition is essential to arrive at a correct orientation. Involved here is not just another working class party, not just a party larger than our own, but the proletariat itself (the class) organized and in the process of being organized. The question: what are the 'internal

dynamics of the CCF'?" can be equally correctly posed, what are the internal dynamics of the Canadian proletariat?"

Section two is titled "Unconditional Support." It attacks this formulation in the 1970 document.

The title of Section Three is again a quote from the 1970 document — "Our orientation to the NDP, to the labor party, is an orientation to the working class in its process of developing political consciousness." They attack this concept.

Section four attacks the concept and is titled, "Intervention in the NDP is an intervention in the working class." This is also a long employed formulation.

Section five is titled "Consciousness in stages." This is Davis and Smiley's interpretation of our orientation. Section six "Conclusion: The Road to Reformism" (*which*) is their idea of where our orientation leads.

Appearing in the same bulletin with the Davis-Smiley document is another by Will Offley. This is titled "The Roots of Degeneration." Davis and Smiley tell us that Offley's contribution "... reproduced the main contours of the evolution of the 'labor party' orientation since the late 1940's."

All these UMT, then RCT, attacks on our orientation — all these attacks on the 1970 document and its major formulations – went by **unanswered**. All these attacks on our formulations - and they attacked these formulations because they did express the essence of our orientation went by with little comment by the leadership. Little or nothing was heard from the leadership in the branches, the Political Committee, or the plenum that fall.

LEADERSHIP DIRECTLY CHALLENGED

Several months before the convention, from a conversation with Marv Gandal, Dowson learned that he (Gandal) was preparing a document on the NDP orientation for the convention. This was before Gandal joined the Revolutionary Communist Tendency and prior to the formation of the United Tendency. It was apparent that this document would be a fundamental attack on our orientation.

Dowson raised this with several members of the leadership pointing out that this attack could not go unanswered. After the failure of these preliminary urgings, at a subsequent Political Committee meeting, he formally proposed that the leadership prepare a document on our orientation in the light of the broadening attacks on it. He proposed that time be allocated in the preconvention discussion, and on the convention agenda, for a discussion of our NDP orientation. The proposal was rejected - only Dowson voted for.

A few months later Stu Sinclair, a PC member who had become an RCT supporter, moved a motion on the PC that the majority present a resolution to the convention on the LSA's NDP orientation. By this time Gandal had become an RCTer and his document an RCT line document. Sinclair's motion also asked that time be allotted to this question on the convention agenda. This too was rejected, with only Sinclair voting for it. Dowson abstained, with a statement that in principle he was completely in agreement that such a document and discussion were necessary. But on the eve of the convention he did not see how it was now possible. There was too little time left for its preparation, discussion on the PC, and presentation to the preconvention discussion.

It should be noted that other comrades were also concerned about the attacks on our orientation. The United Tendency (*tendency formed by the Dowson group –ed.*) in its first declaration, March 16, included as point three, "We stand on the theory and practice of our movement, with regards to the NDP, expressed in the document *Our Orientation to the NDP; the Strategy and its Tactical Application* (1970); the document 'The NDP and the Waffle' adopted by the 1971 plenum, and our practice with regards to the NDP and the Waffle up to the summer of 1972. Subsequently, in its appeal for delegated representation, the UT set aside this point to concentrate on the other two points of its platform. These were: (1) that the LSA/LSO should recognize the new nationalism that has arisen, due to the US takeover, as essentially progressive and link up with it; and (2) support of the international minority tendency (now the Lenin Trotsky Faction - LTF) and its platform of three planks to be advanced at the next world congress.

Gandal's document, by now an RCT line document, appeared three weeks before the convention (Bulletin 44, April 9). While the UT set aside the question of the NDP from its platform, two UT comrades contributed documents on the question. One was Harry Knight's contribution (Bulletin 54) titled "The Collapse of our NDP work in Ontario and some lessons for the future." The other was by R. Dowson called "Theory is Gray but Life is Green" (Bulletin 40, April 1) (*to appear on this website –ed.*).

This latter document is largely a response to a contribution from prominent supporters of the majority, Whitton and Dupont. They held the position that it was the nationalism of the Waffle, which they characterized as bourgeois and reactionary, that led it to break from the NDP (class politics). In keeping with the view widely expressed by the majority leadership both in debate and in our press, Dupont claimed that the Waffle "is running into the arms of the bourgeoisie." They warned us that "comrades who do not want to follow the Waffle's footsteps should learn from its mistakes."

"Theory is Gray But Life is Green" attributed the majority leadership's failure to come to grips with Waffle as it was moving out of the NDP, to its reversal in its appreciation of the nature of the Waffle and its nationalism. This nationalism was suddenly discovered to be bourgeois and reactionary and the reason for the Waffle's break from the NDP.

Dowson also claimed that instead of applying our strategic orientation to the NDP, the majority leadership had made a fetish out of the NDP. "This making a principle of staying in the NDP" **at all costs**, behind a **Stay and Fight Campaign**, when it was clear that Waffle was pulling the viable left out of the NDP, said Dowson, "has nothing in common with our longstanding practice with regards to the NDP." We had to consider the advisability of going out of the NDP with the left, for a period.

CHALLENGED . . . AND EVASION

This contribution, an attempt to discuss the application of our orientation, belatedly to be sure, won a flippant rejoinder from Comrade Fidler on the eve of the convention (Bulletin 52). It would appear that for factional purposes Fidler decided to present himself as the defender of the orientation against Dowson. He asked "does Dowson want us to 'lay aside' our orientation?"

The contribution by Harry Knight (Bulletin 54), which came out late and was probably not assimilated by the movement, explains the phenomenon observed by Germain and used in his attack on the Canadian section. This was the failure of *Labor Challenge* (September 17/72) to differentiate itself from the NDP brass — made all the more necessary by the brass's assault on the mass left wing formation of the Waffle. Germain was unable to explain the absence of a critical attitude to the NDP leadership. It's ABC, he said, "Obviously it is as ABC for the leadership of the LSA as well," he conceded.

However, Knight explained this error of the LSA leadership. He outlined the PC majority record of what he called ". . . their zigzags and their adaptation both to the left and to the right." In the left caucus, he records how we tailed the politics of the Red Circle. And "as a by-product of the PC majority's mission against Waffle's supposed cop-out on socialism in favor of nationalism, of which there is not a shred of evidence . . . we see the euphoric lapses in our press, the muting of our criticism of the NDP leadership, which cannot be explained in any other context."

In the face of the long all-out assault on the NDP orientation, the PC majority leadership remained absolutely silent — except for the contribution by Dick Fidler. This (Bulletin 52) appeared as the delegates gathered at the convention site. While called *In Defence of the Orientation to the NDP* its title is obviously and unmistakably a misnomer. Fidler makes this clear in his introductory remarks.

After four paragraphs of speculative and supercilious jabs at the UT, he turns to the issue. "The comrades of the RCT, for their part, pose a much more explicit challenge to our perspective. The RCT has produced extensive documentation with wide ranging criticisms of formulations which have been used in the past to describe our NDP orientation. They raise some important questions about our record in applying the orientation." Then he turns away from the issue with his declaration that ". . . these are

not the key questions before the membership of the League in this preconvention discussion."

Fidler bypasses the RCT polemics against our orientation by going "behind" the polemics - to what he calls their concept of party building. "Behind the RCT's polemics, there lies a fundamentally different view of revolutionary politics. The RCT's main tactical projection with respect to the NDP —the building of a 'revolutionary' caucus in the party - is directly counterposed to our conception of the basic thrust of our intervention, the building of class struggle caucuses within the labor party which focus on the key political issues of the day."

The entire 17 pages of this document deal almost exclusively with 'Revolutionary Caucus' or 'Left Caucus'. Thus the orientation itself is approached only in an elliptical way. There is no defence here against the RCT's" . . . wide ranging criticisms of formulations . . ." It is as if there was no connection whatsoever between the formulations and the essence of the line they expressed. He makes no attempt to answer the RCT's ". . . questions about our record in applying our orientation." It is as if our record was not related to the orientation itself.

RCT LAYS DOWN THE LINE

Gandal's RCT line document against our NDP orientation concludes with a ten point summary. We will examine some of the salient points to show the totality of their rejection of our orientation and their understanding of the interrelationship between what Fidler calls the "formulations used to describe the orientation" **and the orientation itself.**

Point one rejects our concept that the NDP is a labor party. They characterize the NDP as a "social democratic labor party . . . It is not 'in the way and on the way' to the socialist revolution, it is just in the way — plain and simple." Point two declares "the NDP is not the 'focus of our politics' . . . The NDP is merely an important work area."

The next three points challenge our line on the NDP for being posed as a principle "because it is the class party and it does not matter whether we are (actually) in the party or not — it is the focus of our politics." The NDP, according to point four, "must be treated tactically. In point five they say "endorsing it might depend on an assessment of whether an NDP electoral victory would accelerate or retard the class struggle."

Point six insists "we demonstrate that we support this party grudgingly, reluctantly, that the emphasis is on 'critical' rather than 'support'. We do not sing the praises of the NDP nor do we set 'NDP to power' or 'Vote NDP' in screaming headlines which betray a certain inappropriate enthusiasm on the front page of the press. It insists that "we quite clearly explain 'in a popular manner' that we support this party as a rope supports the hanged..."

Point seven demands that "Our press and cadre always should emphasize that the NDP exists to repress and betray the class struggle and to rationalize the capitalist system. That is its primary function. To the extent it is 'responsive' to mass movements, it responds to deflect and defuse them. To the extent that it has 'progressive' features, it is significantly no more progressive than the most enlightened wing of the bourgeoisie. The election of NDP governments in B.C., Manitoba and Saskatchewan provides excellent opportunities to provide graphic running commentaries on the bankruptcy of social-democratic reformism."

Point eight attacks another formulation of the 1970 document. "The slogan 'Win the NDP to Socialism' should be dropped since the NDP cannot be won to socialism. Revolutionaries do not blatantly deceive the masses and promote such gross illusions."

Point nine challenges us to intervene " . . . and in the labor party with the purpose of presenting the full program." Point ten counterposes expulsions from the NDP as being "preferable to" - what the RCT alleges the LSA has been practising in the NDP - liquidation of the revolutionary program and underground isolation at all costs."

From the record it is an unchallengeable fact that while it was under this sustained all-down-the-line assault, the leadership did not defend the longstanding orientation of the Canadian Trotskyists to the NDP. This alone could not help but weaken the understanding of the LSA's ranks and undermine their confidence in our orientation. This danger was all the greater as the attack from within, carried by the RCT, was but a reflection and a supplement to the attack on our orientation from outside by all our opponents on the left.

THE PLACE OF THE POLITICAL RESOLUTION

There was no NDP document and the discussion was restricted to the political resolution which attempted to encompass a wide ranging series of problems confronting the movement. The section on the NDP in the Political Resolution titled "The NDP and the Crisis of leadership" was quite limited. It had nothing to say on what Fidler recognized as " . . . wide ranging criticisms of formulations which have been used in the past to describe the NDP orientation." Despite the extensive documentation of the RCT, it didn't touch on what Fidler described as " . . . important questions about our record in applying our orientation." Among these "important questions" were charges of tailism and of liquidation into social democratic reformism! Because it ignored these "wide ranging criticisms" and "important questions" the Political Resolution and its section on the NDP were completely irrelevant to the problems confronting the LSA/LSO.

Can a revolutionary socialist cadre organization remain silent before the charges of tailism and capitulation to reformism, which are flung at it from a sizeable current within its own ranks? These charges cannot be dismissed as factional excesses. The RCT tried to document them and motivate them on the basis of political analysis. It is hard to conceive

of a leadership nurtured on Trotskyism, so fond of quoting Cannon, remaining silent under such circumstances. The fact is, however, they did remain silent.

There were no discussions of any significance at any official level of the movement on how to combat this assault. No discussion to make any assessment of it, to determine whether it was completely false or had any substance that might require us to redefine some aspects of our orientation. But though the Central Office leadership remained silent, they were not unaffected by this all-out two-year attack on our orientation.

RETREATS AND ADAPTS

Aside from Fidler's narrowly defined contribution, the only evidence of the thinking of the CO leadership is the "Political Resolution." It has another notable aspect besides its irrelevance to the key problem confronting the LSA/LSO, which was posed by the UMT and the RCT, that is, the Political Resolution is as clean as a hound's tooth of all the formulations which so offended the RCT! Gone are all the formulations that they demanded should be dropped! We look in vain for "labor party," "in the way and on the way," "the focus of our politics -even when it is not the centre of our work," "unconditional support," "intensive fraction work with a non-split perspective," "strategic orientation," (or) "Win the NDP to Socialism," etc.

When the RCT demanded that these formulations be dropped, they motivated their demand. As we showed previously, they locked these formulations right into the line. They were demanding that we drop the longstanding line of the movement. According to their view the terminology was not accidental. They were not to be satisfied with new words and new phrases. They weren't looking for some new expression of the same fundamental strategic orientation that might better describe more subtle aspects of it or different nuances of it. According to them the terminology in the 1970 document very accurately and succinctly expressed the line – how it should be, and had been, practised by the cadres of the LSA/LSO over the years.

The Political Resolution contains a very general, largely historical and descriptive presentation of our orientation. It answers none of the charges levelled by the RCT and it drops, not just one or two but all the offending formulations of the 1970 document. It does this without any explanation to the membership.

We would gather that, although they once thought that these formulations did accurately express our line, the authors of the Political Resolution must have changed their minds. On closer examination, and in the light of experience, they have concluded that these formulations really have little, if anything at all, to do with the essential line — in either its expression or its practice. It appears in fact, that they must have concluded that these

formulations have only served to expose the line and make it vulnerable to the attack of the ultra-left RCT. So . . . to defend the line, the formulations must be dumped!

However, we can only speculate. We were not, and have not yet been told the reasons. None of the offending formulations that appeared in the 1970 document appear in the 1973 Political Resolution. We note in passing that the Political Resolution was edited between its appearance in draft form for the preconvention discussion, and its publication in *Labor Challenge* (July 23/73.) In its preconvention form it described the NDP as a "labor party." In the final, edited version the words "labor party" are replaced by the words "Social Democratic labor party." At another place where the draft read "Revolutionary Marxists give **support** to the NDP as the elementary class alternative" the final version now reads "....give **critical support**" (our emphasis).

The formulations have been dropped — but has the line been changed? Around the time of the formation of the LPT, many of the comrades involved had noted a recurring tendency in the movement. Many comrades had taken on the practice, when referring to the NDP, of no longer calling it a labor party, but rather of referring to it as a quote/unquote/labor party. It had become increasingly prevalent to replace the term labor party altogether, by the designation social democratic party. Many comrades were objecting to the use of the term "unconditional" in describing our strategic and long-range orientation to the NDP. Some objected to saying we "support" the NDP. They wanted to emphasize that, on the contrary, we **oppose** the NDP, period. Although this did not figure high in our thinking, its prevalence made us uneasy and we will return to this problem of terminology.

What struck us particularly, following the convention, was the change in *Labor Challenge*. In the LPT founding statement we said "since the convention a whole series of important articles relating to different aspects of the NDP and our work have been published in our press. These articles show a clear trend towards a sectarian revision of our longstanding strategic orientation, in our opinion, and, in their totality, constitute an abandonment of our orientation to the mass labor party."

LABOR CHALLENGE RECORD

We will now show the magnitude of the break with our NDP orientation by recent articles appearing in *Labor Challenge*. We have chosen four episodes which we think are sufficient to establish our point. This was an arbitrary choice. A full and detailed analysis would fill volumes dealing with almost every issue.

In order to appreciate the enormity of the break we will recall a few aspects of our orientation. Our position of unconditional and critical support to the Canadian labor party is based on our understanding that in this whole period the NDP represents in general, an advance in the rising political consciousness of the Canadian working class. To pull

cadres together, to build the revolutionary vanguard party, it is necessary, through our transitional concept of politics to address ourselves to the working class. As the 1970 document put it, "the NDP remains the focus of all our politics" — even when it is not "the centre of our activities." The NDP is not just another working-class party. It is the concrete expression of independent labor political action at the present general level of the class struggle. The NDP reflects, focuses and advances the consciousness of the working class. We have to participate in this process.

Our propaganda must be based on an understanding of the level of consciousness of the class and the real viability of its present political unity and development. We cannot criticize the NDP solely from the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism. But we must primarily prove our case against the reformists by exposing their treachery when it involves some matters of the gravest concern to the masses. Such an approach requires an activist intervention in the organizations and struggles of the class and is dynamically counterposed to the fundamentalist critics who expound their views as so much dogma, from the sidelines of the working class and their organizations.

At this time we are a tiny revolutionary grouping. To grow into a party, we must employ our understanding of the realities of the class struggle to put forward demands or solutions that appear practical and are necessary to the working class. We direct ourselves to its understanding and its needs. We orient ourselves to its mass labor party. We fight for transitional and democratic demands in and around the NDP. We criticize, oppose, and seek to destroy the influence of the reformist leadership. We fight the reformists in order to break their hegemony over the politicizing layers of the working class in the NDP and to break their influence on the class as a whole.

Our tactics flow out of this interventionist strategy. We cannot pretend that the NDP leadership never take generally correct positions - if it never did, how would one account for its influence over the class? When the NDP leadership take progressive positions they speak to the workers' immediate needs. When they take reactionary positions they speak to their own interests as a privileged bureaucratic apparatus, as petit-bourgeois reformists temporarily at the helm of the workers movement. We pose the socialist alternative sensitively and intransigently. We have nothing in common with the testamentary politics of sectarians. Has *Labor Challenge* adhered to this orientation?

We will examine *Labor Challenge's* coverage of the concept of the "Women's Ministry in British Columbia." In the September 10, 1973 issue there appeared an article on the women's ministry which constituted a 180 degree about turn, a complete reversal of the previous position that appeared in several articles in *Labor Challenge* less than a year earlier. Even more important, this September 10 article constituted an undocumented, complete reversal of our line designed explicitly to meet the very problems posed by such a demand that had been adopted by the 1971 summer plenum of the Central Committee

of the LSA.

The September 10 article titled "Diversion for Feminists -Women's Ministry" (ostensibly a review of a recent publication of the BC NDP Women's Committee) deals with the demand that the BC NDP government establish a Women's Ministry. This demand was passed as a resolution by the November 24-26, 1972 BC NDP convention.

Curiously, this article completely reverses our original support for this demand **without explanation**. In the December 11, 1972 issue of *Labor Challenge*, an article dealing with the BC convention titled "Women Press Struggle in Be NDP" asserted:

"A question of key importance posed by the convention was: Who makes the political decisions in the NDP? This issue emerged most clearly around the passage of a resolution calling for a Ministry of Women's Affairs to be established in their first sitting of the Legislature. The debate on the ministry was the highlight of the convention."

The article continues in the same vein: "The resolution was passed by a solid majority . . . But in spite of the firm decision taken by the convention Premier Barrett informed the press that the ministry would be very low in his government's priority list. It is clear that what Barrett and other right wing NDP cabinet ministers object to is not the proposal for a women's ministry itself, but the thrust of the struggle and program behind this proposal . . . The Barrett leadership . . . does not want to yield an inch to the radical dynamic behind the NDP convention call for a women's ministry . . . "

And it concludes in its summary paragraph: "What are the most immediate tasks before the socialist Left of the BC NDP? The left is challenged to give leadership to those forces seeking to assert the right of the party to control its legislative caucus, especially around the demand for a Ministry of Women.

Our original position of all-out support of this demand carried on into subsequent issues of *Labor Challenge* — for instance an article in the March 5, 1973 issue. In that article, reporting the occupation by militants of a child-care project administered by a "Social Credit-appointed government bureaucracy" we stated that "many NDPer who supported the demands of the occupation say that this spotlighted once again the need for a ministry of women's rights. Such a ministry, if it were rooted in women's groups across the province, would bring enormous pressure to bear on the (NDP) government to meet its responsibilities to women and to carry out NDP policy in this area.

In sharp contradiction to all our previous statements of support of the demand for a women's ministry, the article that appeared in the September 10, 1973 issue of *Labor Challenge* characterizes the campaign for a women's ministry as a "diversion for feminists," as "a false course for the (NDP) women's rights committee." The concept of a women's ministry which *Labor Challenge* said in our March 5 issue "would bring

enormous pressure to bear on the NDP government;" *Labor Challenge* now says "tends to ease the pressure on the government to enact specific reforms of benefit to women. In this sense it lets Barrett, Trudeau and company off the hook." How "Trudeau and company" are "let off the hook" is not clarified.

That the September 10 article is a complete reversal of our position on the women's ministry is not so much as mentioned, let alone explained to the readers of *Labor Challenge*. *Labor Challenge* has reconsidered and dumped our previous viewpoint. Few members of the LSA/LSO are even aware that the public position of the movement has been changed. There has been no circular to that effect and there has been no documentation for the education of our comrades.

When the delegates passed the resolution for a women's ministry a year ago, it is quite clear that we saw it as an anti-bureaucratic move of considerable importance. The convention previously had passed a whole series of resolutions on equal pay legislation, allocations of funds for, and the structuring of, child-care facilities — in fact, almost our entire body of women's liberation demands insofar as we were able to develop them in resolution form. The resolution on the ministry capped it all off.

It was a demand that the NDP parliamentary caucus carry out the will of the delegates who had been voting in line with resolutions passed by the rank and file of the movement. The resolution expressed a profound unease as to the willingness of the liberal-reformist brass, in the face of bourgeois opposition, to implement the will of the party ranks.

That's how we saw the resolution in 1972 — that it posed "a question of key importance" — "who makes the political decisions in the NDP" — and that's how Barrett himself saw it, according to our 1972 coverage.

"Barrett, speaking to the convention itself, stressed that although the delegates set policy, the party's 'political arm' — the government — has the right to decide which of their policies should be implemented. This statement rightly disturbed many delegates since it implied that the role of the membership is purely advisory and that membership decisions in convention have no force or meaning. The need to establish the democratic right of the party membership to control the decision making of the NDP will be the focus of an important struggle in the party in the next period."

How different is that interpretation of the 1972 resolution from the interpretation that is presented in a slighting, passing, and matter-of-fact — not to speak of a totally false — way in the September 1973 article. "The resolution did not demand that the government enact any new legislation. It did not demand that the government do anything other than set up another ministry which it explicitly described as being integrated into the existing bureaucratic framework of the government and state apparatus."

What happened within the year that caused *Labor Challenge* to make one evaluation of the women's ministry demand, sustained by the events out of which it arose in the fall of 1972, and to comment on it in such a totally different way in the process of reviewing a **pamphlet** almost a year later?

Were there some new and important developments in the interval that caused us to reconsider our previous evaluation of the significance of the demand? Was it co-opted by the right wing brass? Did events so unfold as to make a once fighting demand into a substitute for ongoing struggles around concrete issues confronting women activists? Did it become a diversion from mass action into maneuverings and dickerings in the parliamentary arena?

A careful reading of the September 1973 article reveals it to be notably lacking even in so much as a suggestion that circumstances surrounding the demand for a women's ministry are involved.

Nor does the fact that *Labor Challenge* devotes an entire page to the question nine months after the demand was passed suggest that the demand was based largely on conjunctural circumstances and what we said was its chief significance, that it posed "who makes political decisions in the NDP."

In fact, with the protests around the BC NDP government's labor legislation that split this month's convention down the middle, it would appear that what we have said lay behind the women's ministry that "the need to establish the democratic right of the party membership to control the decision-making of the NDP will be the focus of an important struggle in the party in the next period" has become a matter of increasing importance.

The September 1973 article, when you probe further into it – since it sticks to commenting on two speeches in support of the demand that were delivered eight and nine months ago at the same time as we were establishing our position of support of the demand, indirectly affirms that the actual circumstances surrounding the development of the demand are irrelevant. It suggests, although it is not said explicitly, that something more is involved, that up until September 1973 we ourselves were guilty of making an error of much greater significance, although it does not actually characterize the nature of the error.

In order to try to use Yandle and Corrigal as a foil to justify a change in our line, the September 1973 article has to resort to such argumentative methods as saying that "Yandle and Corrigal imply . . ." that "they seem to view . . ." that their "approach. . . which could disarm" . . . etc., etc.

The pamphlet that the September 1973 article polemicizes against is an effective presentation of the views that we ourselves expressed just eight and nine months ago. However one of the articles (Yandle's), as the September 1973 article makes special note of, is titled "A Ministry of Women's Rights – a structural solution." It would seem that this phrase, "a structural solution," is of considerable importance. It is, therefore,

useful to quote Yandle at some length in order to understand what she really said in her written speech of some months ago, and how at variance with reality *Labor Challenge's* handling of this is.

Yandle explains what she means by the phrase "the problem is a structural problem and therefore the solution must be structural as well." A considerable portion of this article is devoted to making the point that the problems confronting women in capitalist society, as she herself summarizes "are not accidental by-products of the system but are completely and inseparably part of the system." Refreshingly, and obviously a reflection of the profoundly radical impact that women's liberation is having on the NDP, Yandle attributes all the major ills of the day to the fact that society is "based on a capitalist economy" and scores liberal reformists for not recognizing that poverty, etc. are "not going to be eliminated without making some very fundamental changes in the system of things." In summarizing this section she writes: "The way to begin to correct this is systematically to change and, if necessary, dismantle those institutions that now perpetuate inequality and oppression and to substitute for them new, socialist institutions."

Having dealt with the problem in general, Yandle moves onto the question of the Ministry of Women's Rights, and **how she** personally sees it.

"The first thing to understand about the Ministry is that the idea was not conceived in the head of a bureaucrat, or by anyone concerned with channeling the women's movement into a bureaucracy. Nor was it conceived as a substitute for the women's movement. The idea first came from the NDP Women's Committee itself; it was seen not as a panacea for every ill, but as a means to begin the task of breaking down the structural inequality that women face."

Finally, in the summary she likens the demand to those which "we as socialists argue for in relation to the labor movement – the right to strike, the shorter work week, the removal of repressive laws – none of these things is designed to replace the labor movement." So "the Ministry of Women's Rights is not proposed as a substitute for organizing to change these institutions. Neither is it a crutch to lean on or a structure to hide behind."

Having emphasized the possibilities she hopes reside in the demand, Yandle mentions "some of the things a Ministry cannot do. A Ministry cannot take the place of women organizing. A ministry will not end the social inequality of women. No significant social change is ever made by government decree alone unless that decree reflects what is already happening in society at large and is thus the reflection of a larger movement."

Since it is apparent that Yandle in her views as expressed in the reviewed pamphlet – and we are referred to no others – in no way sees the women's ministry as a substitute to struggle for concrete policies which meet women's needs, as *Labor Challenge's* September 1973 article says is necessary; since it is apparent that Yandle in no way sees (from her written views) the ministry as a substitute for mass action to involve masses of women who have not yet taken action and to pressure the labor movement to actively

support these campaigns, as *Labor Challenge*'s September 1973 article says is necessary; and since it is apparent that she is by no means opposed (but from her written views, quite the contrary) to demands that the Barrett government set up abortion clinics, become a model as an employer of women workers, etc., etc., then what does it actually mean to end up as the September 1973 article does with the ringing cry that the women's rights committee must spearhead campaigns demanding concrete legislation now, and "reject the dead end strategy proposed by Yandle and Corrigal"?

To the average reader of the September 1973 article, LCs attack (on the views of Yandle and Corrigal as they are expressed in the pamphlet that we have polemicized against) can only appear to be essentially unprincipled, dogmatic, sectarian and factional, besides being a quite unintelligible attack on the concept of a Women's Ministry which up until that moment we ourselves quite fully supported.

Does the Women's Ministry demand, contrary to our understanding of it last December, represent "a false course," as our September 1973 article now claims? On the basis of all the evidence presented in the September 1973 article we cannot by any means conclude that it does. It is an anti-bureaucratic demand, a formulation of the determination of the membership of a labor party formation that they, and the policies that their delegates formulate in convention, should determine the policies of the leadership of that labor party formation in parliamentary office.

A question remains – what is meant by "the dead-end strategy" allegedly proposed by leading BC NDP women activists Yandle and Corrigal? We have presented the substance of what they wrote, on what is suggested to be an extremely significant phrase in their characterization of the ministry – that it is a "structural solution." We have no cause to differentiate ourselves from how this phrase is explained in Yandle's summary paragraph – the full realization of women's goals "will not be achieved until this society is fundamentally changed, until we change these structures and institutions of our society and economy that lock us into our present situation . . ."

In fact, in characterizing the LSA's attitude to the NDP in government, in the report titled "The NDP and the Waffle" submitted to and adopted by a plenum of the Central Committee of the LSA/LSO in the summer of 1971, we strongly identify with Yandle's approach of structural solutions in the NDP government. On page 32 of the bulletin containing that report we affirm, in opposition at that time, not to the editors of *Labor Challenge*, but to Manitoba Wafflers, that :

"We, on the other hand, aim to bring all the mass movements to bear upon the NDP governments, to make those governments not substitutes for the mass movements, but powerful supplements. Where it is in office, the NDP should be challenged to put the resources of the state machinery (our emphasis) at the service of those movements, to build their campaigns and to implement their demands to the fullest extent possible.

"As the abortion campaign in Manitoba demonstrates, these NDP regimes are very vulnerable to mass pressures from the left. In many cases, all we have to do is mount a

campaign; it is not necessary to urge the government to actually violate the criminal code. (Our emphasis.) We can simply pressure it to use its control of provincial hospitals, in accordance with the tribunals required under existing federal law . . . “

By means of this strategic approach of intervening within the NDP (of putting demands on the NDP government) and through the pressure of the mass feminist movement, we caused the anti-abortion forces to back down in Manitoba. The impact of this strategy was devastatingly revealed in the way in which the Schreyer government was forced to disassociate itself from the notorious anti-abortionist Borowski, ultimately leading to Borowski's resignation from the cabinet.

In reference to the question of how Marxists should approach the question of the state in relation to structural solutions, there is one paragraph in the September 1973 *Labor Challenge* article, inserted at the bottom of the second column from the end, that requires comment.

This paragraph, addressing itself to feminists, tells them that they must understand that the state apparatus cannot be taken over by women, in reference we must suppose, to a ministry in the parliamentary apparatus of a bourgeois state – that this will not alter the basic character of the state as an instrument of class oppression and exploitation. The state, the September 1973 article notes "must be replaced in the process of a revolutionary transformation of society, a socialist revolution."

All of this is very true, but how relevant is it to the question before us? Is this paragraph a hint to our readers? Is it possible that *Labor Challenge* is trying to suggest that when all is said and done the demand for a women's ministry is a violation of principle? Are we suggesting that to support such a demand betrays a profound ignorance of the state as an instrument of class oppression and fosters the most dangerous illusions, that the demand of itself and in itself is totally false?

Are the editors of *Labor Challenge* stating, by implication, that the 1971 Plenum document's position of challenging the NDP to put the resources of the state machinery at the service of movements such as the Women's liberation movement is false and illusory as well?

In the 1971 report the Central Committee characterized such challenges, an abstentionist criticism. Is *Labor Challenge* now stating that such a position entails the betray of revolutionary principle?

It may well be that Yandle and Corrigal have some illusions as to the nature of the state, although they have the profoundly radical understanding that women's oppression is structured right into society and that profoundly radical understanding that there is a need for totally new structures. They may think that the structuring of the new socialist society can take place on some progressive piecemeal basis of restructuring the old capitalist apparatus. If they hold this view, it is by no means clear from their written words in the pamphlet under review. And, even if it were so, it is debatable that we would use this occasion to take them to task in this matter.

Above all, what have such illusions got to do with the position that we Trotskyists took of support for a women's ministry almost a year ago, which *LC* dumped surreptitiously in this same article? We had then, and we have now, no illusions whatsoever about the need, in order to lay the basis for the structures of the new society, to smash the bourgeois state institutions. Our position was not based on any illusions about the state but on an understanding of the political situation in British Columbia, on the level of the class struggle, on the relationship of class forces, on the role of the labor party in this struggle. The demand expresses the objective needs of the class. It flows out of their present level of consciousness and takes them forward in struggle, on this occasion, against the reformist bureaucracy that is in office in the parliamentary apparatus of the BC sector of the Canadian bourgeois state.

While it is essential that we Trotskyists acquaint those who will listen with the broad historic experiences of the past – with Marxist theory – particularly with the Marxist theory of the state, the masses are going to learn about it, the need to smash it and to build new forms useful to them, in the process of making demands, particularly on those who they think represent them but who cower before the necessary surgery. The illusions of the masses are going to be dispelled by experience.

The Central Committee emphasized the importance of the workers' experience in learning this lesson about the state in the *1971 Plenum report* (page 32):

"We should welcome this development (of an NDP government) without reservations; the governmental experience is the best possible experience we can have with the NDP – not because the NDP under its present leadership will establish an anti-capitalist workers' government, but because the Canadian workers will only overcome their reformist illusions by seeing in action the total inadequacies of social democracy. But whether the advanced layers of the class succeed in drawing the correct conclusions from their experiences depends on the intervention of the revolutionary socialists, and our ability to consolidate and build, in the course of the struggle, with the reformists, a mass revolutionary alternative to the reformists. . . "

But to build a revolutionary alternative means to be able to influence and associate ourselves with the most radical and democratic elements within the NDP who are beginning to draw essentially correct conclusions about the nature of the class struggle. We cannot succeed in this endeavor by falsely pointing an accusing finger of reformist illusions (or making vague innuendos leading in that direction) to such promising elements. Instead, we should develop a friendly and serious attitude to such elements and attempt to present to them a rounded appreciation of our NDP orientation.

By our giving critical support to the NDP, while we continue to project the need to build the revolutionary vanguard party and even declare that support the more effectively to pull together the nucleus of such a party, sectarians and dogmatists accuse **us** of promoting illusions about the NDP. In calling for the NDP to power, to parliamentary office, essentially the illusion of power which in reality resides in the bourgeoisie's control of the means of production and the multitudinous forms of the state rule,

sectarians and dogmatists accuse **us** of promoting illusions about the nature of parliament. But the illusions are already there and our course is designed to rid the masses of their illusions about parliament and the state. It is by placing demands on the NDP government that the workers in BC are going to learn both the nature of the NDP, and NDP government, and the bourgeois state. That is the essence of our transitional concept.

These are the concepts that *Labor Challenge* (September 10 1973 issue) dumped in its reversal of the Central Committee's clear and unequivocal position that was in harmony with our longstanding strategic orientation to the NDP.

MANITOBA ELECTIONS

How has *Labor Challenge* adhered to our strategic orientation in the Manitoba election coverage? We refer to Volume 4, No. 10, 11 and 12. In this series of articles *Labor Challenge* dealt with the NDP as an opponent political organization which we could not be said to support in any serious way. It did not deal with the NDP in the framework of our orientation and our understanding of its contradictory character. *Labor Challenge* attacked both the campaign and the NDP as a political party, in the framework of abstract support and concrete massive criticism.

Coming into the election, the editors of *Labor Challenge* made a withering attack on the NDP government. They paid no heed to the realities of the NDP's slim parliamentary majority, as if this was not a matter of special concern to workers at a time of an election. They gave only slighting and grudging recognition to the positive legislation that the NDP government had actually passed.

In the lead article of the June 25th issue, *Labor Challenge* ridiculed "the very modest reforms it legislated in the preceding four years" and their extension such as sewers, waterworks, free denticare from birth to age twelve and government fire insurance. It dismissed the impact that it is having in the rural areas through "policies aimed at preserving small towns and family farms." These of course are among the most serious concerns of the working masses and are a key to their radicalization.

We must ask: to whom was *Labor Challenge* addressing itself? We can say for sure that it wasn't speaking to the consciousness of the class. This article didn't provide us a hearing in the NDP either, which is the "focus of our politics". Perhaps it was intended to prove to Comrade Germain that we are not tailists, and thus we end up addressing ourselves to the particular concerns of the "vanguard."

In another article the editors wrote: "Schreyer and his NDP government have made strenuous efforts to placate business interests during their four years in office.... Big Business defines the election, inaccurately, as a contest between free enterprise and socialism . . . the NDP's program no more represents socialism than the other parties favor free enterprise . . ." This scorn and ridicule of the NDP and Big Business's very real opposition to it – of which the Canadian workers are very much aware – is qualified by an interesting innovation used to characterize the NDP. The editors state that the NDP is supportable only in that it is "ultimately responsible to the labor movement."

Heretofore we have characterized the NDP as being "labor-based" which defines its essential class character, its significance, despite its leadership and program, and that is why we are oriented to it. With this new formulation *Labor Challenge*'s message to NDP present and future supporters in this election was that the only progressive significance of the NDP is not its present, but only in its "ultimate" responsibility to their interests.

Support of the NDP was presented as defensible only on broad historical grounds, solely on what we alleged it posed, symbolically, and not on the record of anything at all that it has done, or that it actually projects that might be in the interests of the working class.

The implications of this new formulation are, to say the least, somewhat questionable and certainly a step away from our heretofore precise concepts.

In a subsequent paragraph in the same article *Labor Challenge* alleged that the "NDP regime in Manitoba is administering capitalism, helping to make the system run better for the businessmen." We assume that *Labor Challenge* was not alleging that this is the aim of the NDP leadership. **Their** fatal flaw is that they think the interests of the workers are not diametrically opposite to those of the capitalist class – the real rulers (not parliament) of the system – and think that an extensive network of social reforms, even socialism, can be realized through accumulative reforms of capitalism. Unfortunately the working class also shares these illusions, promoted fundamentally by the capitalist class and their liberal and Tory ideologues. It is because the NDP is not "helping to make the system run better for businessmen" that "Big Business" quite clearly and unmistakably opposes the NDP, even somewhat hysterically sometimes, when they define, as *Labor Challenge* previously noted, the election "as a contest between free enterprise and socialism."

The article continued in this way onto page four where we were told that the "key challenge is how to use the opportunity presented by the election to develop the struggle against big business domination." Up until now we have assumed that the electoral struggle and victory for the labor party is a struggle against big business domination and at that juncture was a key one. Did the editors of *Labor Challenge* consider that mass action was the only key challenge at the time of the Manitoba election?

How can these articles be said in any way to adhere to our well worked out orientation to the NDP – an orientation which neither gives anything to reformism, but does not ignore its hold either?

The coverage in Volume 4, No. 11, in our second issue on the election, abandoned a key concept of our strategic orientation to the NDP. The key to placing our unconditional and critical support in an understandable context has always been not to make an identity of the liberal-reformist leadership with the labor party itself. We never conceded the party to the leadership.

We have a stated policy to win the NDP, the rank and file of that party, to a socialist program. This key concept goes out the window with the following quotations from Volume 4 No. 11: 'The NDP holds out little prospect of major advance . . . the NDP's betrayal of native peoples' support . . . the whole NDP approach is one of smug self-satisfaction, appealing to the conservative instincts of middle-class Manitobans.... No substantial force within the party is today advancing a socialist alternative . . . the NDP

campaign is in no way aimed at increasing popular desire and readiness for change . . . the NDP, posing as moderate administrators of the capitalist system . . . ”

The page four headline is "Manitoba NDP blurs class image." The comrades who wrote this article have blurred the most important of distinctions. They have blurred the distinction between the liberal-reformist leadership of the NDP and the party as a whole and thereby dumped our longstanding position of unconditional and critical support.

We must ask the comrades of the editorial board if they thought that Gandal's document on the NDP (Bulletin #44, April 9/72) which was submitted during the last pre-convention discussion differs in orientation from the coverage of the Manitoba election in these two issues. The 10 conclusions that Gandal and the RCT posed are basically in accord with the treatment of the NDP in this coverage. This is particularly true of conclusion number 7 (page 40): "The election of NDP governments in B.C., Manitoba and Saskatchewan provides excellent opportunities to provide graphic running commentaries of the bankruptcy of social democratic reformism." And in point number 6 (on page 39), we find: "We demonstrate that we support this party grudgingly, reluctantly, that the emphasis is on 'critical' rather than 'support'."

Although the comrades responsible for *Labor Challenge* may have reservations about the exact formulations in the RCT document, it is clear that they have much more in common with it than they have with our well-developed and long-held strategic orientation. Marxists understand that you can't really understand a thing until you understand its opposite. The 1970 document is the thing in this case. So far, the Gandal document is the opposite and constitutes the only clear critique that justifies the mistaken line of *Labor Challenge*.

Finally, in Vol. 4, number 12, on page five, we announced the victory of the Manitoba NDP in *Labor Challenge*. This was a factual article that showed the very real gains made in the election. In the context of the previous coverage the reader must conclude that *Labor Challenge* was not intervening to help the NDP but only to make the record for the future when, as Gandal put it, "they will see we are right."

Also, in conformity with one of Gandal's strictures, the article made a "graphic running commentary" on the inadequacy of the NDP's campaign by stating: "The NDP campaign was built solely around the selling of the premier's personality, presenting Schreyer as a veritable miracle-man. As such it did nothing to build the confidence of the working class base of the NDP in its own power."

Ironically, at the end of the article, *LC* let **Schreyer himself** sum up the real issue of the election. *LC* quoted him, without any comment at all, as saying: "We are taking on those who really control the wealth and the destiny of our nation. But if we are really determined, we can beat money any day of the week." Did this reflect a campaign built solely around "the premier's personality" or one that does "nothing to build the confidence of the working class base"?

THE CASE OF THE RAILWAY STRIKE

In dealing with the Women's Ministry, *Labor Challenge*'s disorientation on our traditional approach to the NDP revealed a general unhinging. Its approach to the NDP so deteriorated that it wound up unable to even deal **truthfully** with the railway strike.

Labor Challenge's critical rejection of the NDP came to full flower in its coverage of the railway strike. This was certainly one of the most important labor battles of the entire year to which appropriately *Labor Challenge* allocated considerable space and prominence. The editors' magnification of the bankruptcy of the NDP leadership led *Labor Challenge* into a unique and devastatingly false position. Assuming that the comrades did their job and read Hansard and the bourgeois press, we can only conclude from this coverage that the editors have become completely blinded by their hatred for the NDP leadership and so contemptuous of illusions about parliament, that they have distorted their reporting to the point of exposing themselves to a charge of lying.

On page one of Vol. 4, number 15, *Labor Challenge* claimed: "Lewis and NDP MPs failed to oppose parliamentary strikebreaking . . ." On page two: "Instead of taking a clear, principled stand which could have educated many workers, the NDP joined the haggling over the terms under which the rail workers' strike would be broken . . ." On page three: "the NDP has offered no support to the rail unions . . . its parliamentary representatives have supported the strikebreaking moves of the Liberals." *LC* went on to say that the NDP "endorsed the imposed wage settlement in the rail strike . . ."

What really happened? The NDP fought against this legislation and for the demands of the rail unions. What everyone but *Labor Challenge*, knows was reported everywhere. Even *Labor Action*, the publication of the Canadian Lambertists (*an international Trotskyist current with small forces in Canada -ed*), which thought the NDP opposition "half hearted and timid," reported that "in reversal of the role it played in the last rail strike the NDP opposed the bill sending the rail workers back . . . the mounting attack on the trade union leaderships . . . made it mandatory that the NDP oppose this piece of strikebreaking legislation."

The NDP opposed the bill in principle. They fought against legislative intervention in the strike and voted against it with the support of one Tory MP. After the defeat of this position they put forward a motion to amend the bill which would raise the level of the base wage increase to the last negotiating figure of the union. They lost the vote. They then supported a Conservative Party amendment which was to raise the base wage increase to a point between the union's position and the Liberal government's. This was defeated. They then reaffirmed their principled opposition to the bill and voted against it.

What should *Labor Challenge* have said in the context of our strategic orientation to the NDP? In the past, we would have directed ourselves to the main class question and thus the truth of that debate, instead of searching for some way to attack the NDP leadership at all costs and on all occasions. We would have told the simple truth and

brought that to the attention of the working people of Canada. We would have taken advantage of the NDP speeches, some of which were good, to deepen the resistance of the class to compulsory arbitration. We would have demonstrated this debate was further proof of the need for independent labor political action and called on workers to participate in the NDP.

Instead, *Labor Challenge* stooped to falsify the NDP's position and hid behind the demagogic of Liberal Jean Marchand. This is the same Marchand who is known throughout the left, particularly in Quebec, as a notorious renegade because of his defection from the post of leader of the CNTU (*the second largest trade union federation in Quebec –ed.*) to become a Liberal cabinet minister. *Labor Challenge* went so far as to write that "Transport Minister Jean Marchand scored a telling point against the NDP . . ." In this case, the telling point that we commended Marchand for saying is "If the NDP had really taken a socialist attitude they would have been opposed to any kind of settlement legislated by this House, regardless of public opinion." It is incomprehensible that we would quote, approvingly, a labor renegade to the bourgeoisie against the labor party leadership. It indicates that *LC* has abandoned the distinction between the two. It also indicates that we are no longer talking to workers who have loyalty to their labor party and who would charge us with the responsibility to expose Marchand for the rat he is.

Marchand used ultra-left demagogic about how real socialists would have proceeded – 'regardless of public opinion.' What is implicit in this "telling point"?

Should the NDP have boycotted the debate? Should the NDP parliamentarians have abrogated their duty to fight for the highest minimum level as the starting point for the wage negotiations that were going to continue? Do *Labor Challenge*'s editors think that parliament is not an arena for negotiation with the Liberal government, employer of the workers in the nationalized CNR? And let us not forget the NDP **opposed the bill in principle as well**. How do the editors think the caucus should have proceeded? They don't say. They just let Marchand make the "telling point" that they have not "really taken a socialist attitude . . ." as if anything at all is useful to attack the NDP with.

Our position of unconditional and critical support would have left plenty of room to attack Lewis's speech to the Parliament Hill demonstration. We could have had a very educational article on the need for extra-parliamentary struggle and the brass's uneasiness about it. As a matter of fact, if we had begun by recognizing the basic **correctness** of the NDP in this debate we could have put forward any valid criticisms. The telling point is that there wasn't enough for *Labor Challenge* to criticize so it distorted reality, thus making *Labor Challenge* unique as a left paper because it proceeded from what didn't happen.

In Vol. 4, number 16, there was a curious ambivalence in the article on page 9 of this issue where we discussed the return to work with a union militant. We didn't recommend defiance but, in the lead of the article, we quoted Louis Laberge (*then president of Quebec's largest union federation, QFL-CLC*) as saying that, if he were president of the CLC, he would have recommended the workers not to return. "If a law is unjust, I would fight it no matter what the cost."

The fact that we did not comment on Laberge's statement implies that we were supporting defiance. But given the heavy penalties for defying the legislation and the conjuncture of the ebbing militancy of the strikers, combined with deterioration of general public support, such a position would have been adventurist.

The interview that followed was with a very class conscious militant who was a member of one of the last locals to go back to work. He pointed out some of the very real gains of the strike in the breakdown of the traditional barriers among the rail workers who are in many separate craft unions, and the growth of consciousness of the necessity for one industrial, perhaps Canadian, union. He indicated that there were now new possibilities to fight the conservative union brass .

He told of one of the meetings in the Vancouver area where strikers passed a resolution calling on the CLC, the BC Federation of Labor, and the Vancouver Labor Council to organize mass rallies in support of their right to strike. He said "we hoped by the resolution to legitimize the intervention of trade unionists in other parts of the country. But it was never picked up by any significant forces . . . Therefore the only responsible action we could recommend to the members, (and the council did this) was that they return to work."

Do we think Lewis should have acted differently? Should he have publicly split with the trade union leadership and urged railway workers to defy the legislation? What were **we** recommending? What position did **we** have, hiding behind the romantic rhetoric of Laberge's statement? Did we think that the class, whom we are supposed to be writing to, was surging to break past the leaders of their movements? If that were so, the leadership's conservatism would be a betrayal. We would have been right to judge their defaults as if they were positive acts. But it was not so.

We should have been writing careful, positive articles about the potentials revealed in these class battles. At this stage of development, it is our **support** of the class struggles and organizations that is the main bridge to the workers' consciousness – not the criticisms of their, as yet un-discredited, leadership. This leadership will be discredited by events, not irresponsible attacks. Instead of making the reformist leaders the main target of our attack, we should have struck first and foremost against the bosses and their political stooges!

THE MACK-ADDISON EXPULSIONS

Another indicator of the change in our orientation to the NDP was *LC*'s treatment of the Mack-Addison expulsions (Vol.4, No.16). The first thing we must note is that in the framework of "long range fraction work with a no-split perspective," it was either just a foolish act or a provocation to ask the New Democrat to accept an ad from *Labor Challenge*. **The LSA and its press are proscribed in the NDP.** We have fought that proscription as supporters and members of the NDP but the reality of the struggle at that time dictated a defensive posture on the part of socialist militants in the labor party. The only justification for such an aggressive request would be that we are attempting to expose the NDP brass as being opposed to having socialists in the party. Of course they

are. Didn't they just expel the Waffle? Have they not got a long record of expelling Trotskyists? Was there some viable force within the NDP that we are seeking to rally and educate by having them reject our ad? Did *Labor Challenge* have a large NDP readership that we hoped would be angered and therefore join with us to increase the circulation of our paper? Why did we do it?

To find a sensible answer we have to drop our strategic and long range orientation which would make us consider such questions and turn to the needs we would feel if we had a position of treating the NDP as an opponent political organization which we were forced to expose at every opportunity – even when we had to provoke the opportunity. We would be searching for the chance to do what Gandal and the RCT said in their NDP document. As they see our purpose, it is that "our press and cadre **always** should emphasize that the NDP exists to repress and betray the class struggle and to rationalize the capitalist system" (emphasis added). "It (the NDP) is just in the way – plain and simple." ("The NDP is *in the way, and on the way*" previously being an iconic LSA phrase –ed.)

Or if not, let's assume that it was all a mistake and the comrades somehow thought that the ad would be accepted. Let's assume that they overlooked the fact that the sample copy they sent to the NDP contained the political resolution with the sharpest formulation of our difference with the program of the party and their leadership.

Imagine our chagrin when we discovered that we had given the NDP brass a fortuitous opportunity to expel more comrades and deepen the prejudice that exists against us in the party. But it won't work much further. The way *Labor Challenge* replied to Vichert (then NDP Provincial Secretary) was in the framework of deepening our differentiation from the NDP.

We **do** have a tradition of how we defend our right to be in the NDP. We have always fought on the grounds that emphasize what we as socialists have in common with the NDP as a labor party. We have always pointed out how we are the best defenders and builders of the labor party. We have always refused to let the leadership sidetrack the argument into the question of incompatible ideologies. Recognizing the level of development of the consciousness of the working class at this time, and the brass's very real mandate to lead the party, we have always argued for our right to be in the party on the basis of our work and the concrete necessity for the NDP to follow socialist policies. When they have tried to make it a discussion of reform versus revolution, we have countered with our defensive demands that they implement the socialist positions adopted at conventions. In this way we aimed to mobilize the democratic sentiments of the rank and file behind us.

We have always taken special care to circumvent the prejudice in the ranks of the NDP against dual party structures. During the formation of the NDP we posed the concept of a federated structure, with ourselves as a legitimate part of the NDP. We have always defended ourselves as a legitimate socialist wing in and of the NDP - never as a counter-party within the party, with a tactical adaptation to that party.

So it is difficult to even imagine our line in *Labor Challenge* (volume 4, number 16). But

there it is. They proudly published the whole of Vichert's letter that substantiates that ours is only a tactical adaptation and we are thus not truly supporters of the NDP.

But that is small potatoes in relation to the convention resolution *Labor Challenge* handed Vichert to use against us. And *Labor Challenge* welcomed the argument on his grounds. It used this expulsion as a chance to do propaganda for the Leninist party and the revolutionary road to socialism. As Vichert said in his letter, "I would be grateful if you would give this letter as much publicity as you can." Well, we sure are obliging, and he must have been doubly grateful that we hastened to validate his contention that we have a "point of view which is in fundamental opposition to the democratic socialism of the NDP."

That our strategic orientation had been abandoned for a tactic of fundamental criticism, sugar-coated with abstract support is underscored by the fact that the LSA made no appeal against these expulsions to the ranks of the party – in astonishing contrast to all our previous responses.

Ironically, the only place in which an appeal was made was in the November '73 issue of *Liberation* (journal of La Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière, Quebec homologue of the LSA) which is circulated primarily in Quebec where the NDP has almost no base.

Labor Challenge ended its article with the concept that we intended to fight on (illegally? subversively?) because, despite its program, its leadership and its structure, "to the degree that the NDP is rooted in the class struggle, rank and file militant currents will inevitably emerge to contest the class collaborationist course of the leadership." This prose conforms all too well to the Gandal-RCT line on the "revolutionary" approach to expulsions. We will have to forgive any present militants who might conclude that they would have to know how to do a better job than we! But it is probably better they consider us inept than sectarian. Truly a Hobson's choice, and inexcusable given our understanding of the problem and our wealth of experience in dealing with it.

YOUNG/RIDDELL REPLY ON LSA-LSO RECORD

On the very eve of our convention the IEC Majority Tendency thrust into the international discussion a document that assailed the LSA/LSO on a whole series of fronts of its work. This document, authored by Germain and titled "In Defence of Leninism: In Defence of the Fourth International," focused first and foremost on our position on the NDP. The IEC Majority Tendency charged that "the position which the LSA/LSO leadership has adopted towards the reformist social-democratic party, the NDP . . . expresses a clear tailist deviation from Leninism."

Germain has been familiar with the work of the Canadian section for a long time. Now, for the first time, he charges the Canadian section with deviationism. According to Germain, the position that the Labor Party Tendency is challenging the central office leadership with abandoning has all along been a "tailist deviation from Leninism."

"Tailism" was the word that the RCT pinned on the orientation that was outlined in the 1970 document, *Our Orientation to the NDP; the Strategy and its Tactical Application*, over a year ago.

While the Political Committee Majority did not defend the LSA/LSO from this charge in the pre-convention and convention discussion, and certainly did not do so with the generalities of the Political Resolution, Comrades Young and Riddell have now attempted such a defence in their reply to Germain titled "The Real Record of the Canadian Section: in reply to Comrade Germain."

Thus we have two important pieces of documented evidence to examine: (1) our press, and whether a series of articles in their totality constitute an abandonment of our longstanding orientation, and (2) the Young/Riddell contribution and whether it actually is a defence of our longstanding orientation.

We have not dealt with the work of the movement, largely for two reasons: (1) with the defection of the Waffle, our work in the NDP has suffered a tremendous setback; and (2) such an analysis would rest to a considerable degree on an interpretation of events about which there is little documentary evidence. We do not, for instance, evaluate the dispute over our experience with the Red Circle in the Ontario NDP. Nor do we deal with the controversies over our line at the BC federal convention. To do so , we would have to resort to interpreting impressions and recollections that this or that comrade has of those interesting and highly relevant experiences. We are passing them by in favor of documented evidence, more or less available to everyone, showing the abandonment of our line and practice.

Germain's document "In Defence of Leninism: in defence of the Fourth International" is one of the most important documents in the discussion taking place throughout the world-wide Trotskyist movement. It is of particular importance to Canadian Trotskyists, not only because it singles out their organization and its central orientation for attack, but because it inevitably casts a pall over and discredits a most significant contribution that the LSA/LSO has made to the international discussion on party building - particularly in those countries where our sections are small and relatively isolated while confronted with the challenge of a mass labor party formation. We are referring to the contribution that we submitted to this international discussion over two years ago, the document *Our Orientation to the NDP; the Strategy and its Tactical Application*. This was the sole Canadian contribution to the international discussion until the recent Young/Riddell contribution and appeared in International Information Bulletin No.6 in 1971 (November 1971).

If today, with their continental guerrilla warfare strategy, leading elements in the IEC Majority Tendency can be said to be adapting to ultra-leftist pressures in the new radicalization, this cannot be said to have always been their tendency. For many years they were practitioners of "entry *sui generis*" which led in many countries, particularly in Belgium where Germain played the leading role, to adaptationism, even liquidationism, into social-democratic formations of the most classic type. This policy was terminated

only by earth-shaking events – the rise of the new youth radicalisation, its explosion in the French struggles of May-June 1968, and the flood of new and militant forces into our debilitated ranks.

TWO AIMS TO GERMAIN'S ATTACK

Thus the Germain document serves two key purposes. First, it diverts the attention of the world movement from the IEC Majority Tendency's adaptationism to ultra-leftist pressures in the new radicalisation. It distracts the world movement from the IEC Majority's failure to make a serious evaluation and allow the world movement to assimilate the lessons of the disasters that their adaptationism has brought us, particularly in Bolivia and Argentina. The Germain document does this by raising the bogey of adaptationism to reformist social democracy, of tailist deviationism from Leninism by at least two Trotskyist formations supporting the Lenin-Trotsky Faction.

Secondly, the Germain document attempts to dismiss any serious evaluation by the world movement of the significant contribution of Canadian Trotskyism on how to cope with a mass labor party formation and win revolutionary cadres on a principled basis to Trotskyism and the Fourth International. It tries to bury the principled experience of the Canadian Trotskyist movement which stands in such direct counterposition to the liquidationist experiences of important parts of the European cadre extending over the 1950's and into the 1960's. It attempts to do so by smearing the Canadian Trotskyist experience as being in effect a violation of Leninist-Trotskyist principles.

Comrade Germain is a longstanding leader of the world movement with years of detailed and first-hand experience with the Canadian section and its leadership. He is well acquainted with the orientation of the Canadian movement to the NDP labor party formation and its experiences in carrying out that orientation. Up until this damning and sweeping attack on our orientation to the NDP, Germain and his co-thinkers have not so much as **uttered a word of criticism** of this central aspect of the Canadian section's work. With this contribution however, Germain frontally attacks that orientation now in operation since the formation of the NDP in 1961 and almost a decade before that with its predecessor, the CCF.

There can be no misunderstanding. Germain's attack is not on this or that incident or possible misapplication of our orientation on certain occasions. It is an attack from the point of view of principle, on the orientation itself. This is of course quite understandable in the light of the IEC Majority's support of the RCT right up until it split from the Canadian section and aligned with the Revolutionary Marxist Group.

According to Germain, "the position that the LSA/LSO (Canadian section) leadership — staunch supporter of the minority position on Latin America — has adopted towards the reformist social-democratic party, the NDP, in its country, and its position on the October

30, 1972 general elections in Canada in particular, expresses a clear tailist deviation from Leninism." The paragraphs following this statement outline the particular evidence – extensive quotes from a leaflet published by the YS-LJS, and an editorial from *Labor Challenge*. They are offered as proof of the general charge that our position on the NDP is tailist.

To make it crystal clear that he is not merely attacking inadequacies in a couple of the many articles that appear in the Canadian Trotskyist press on the NDP, Germain quickly moves off these extensive quotes, as if what he says about them is self-evident. For our part, we would note in passing that one of the pieces of evidence, the YS/LJS leaflet, is a competent presentation of our orientation and the other, the LC editorial is a violation of it.

Germain continues for several paragraphs to give his view of the character of the NDP, its leadership and its role in the class struggle, and contrasts several sentences and phrases from the quoted articles with what he considers to be Leninist concepts. He continues with several quotations from "Left-Wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder," which he counterposes to the position of the Canadian Trotskyist movement.

The Young/Riddell reply, appearing in Volume X No. 16 of the International Internal Bulletin, attempts to come to grips with Germain's scatter-gun blast at a whole number of positions of the Canadian Trotskyists. Our comments in this contribution will be limited to Germain's attack on our orientation to the NDP and Young and Riddell's comments on that position.

How do Comrades Young and Riddell defend the Canadian Trotskyist movement from the attack launched by Germain against the position it "has adopted towards the reformist social democratic party, the NDP" which he charges "expresses a clear tailist deviation from Leninism"?

After noting that Germain makes a long series of criticisms of the two items he quotes, they separate two central points. The two central points that they filter out of Germain's criticisms are: first, that the passages he refers to that argue support of the NDP in elections do not advance a revolutionary critique of the social-democratic leadership of the NDP, and second, that the passages argue that an NDP victory would propel the class struggle forward. This latter projection Young/Riddell add "is by no means guaranteed in advance."

YOUNG/RIDDELL TAKE EVASIVE ACTION

"There is no question that these criticisms are absolutely correct. A number of formulations in the passages are erroneous," concede Young and Riddell. After making such an admission they challenge Germain with the responsibility of having "to round out

his criticisms of these two passages by noting that such erroneous formulations contrast with the correct line carried by the LSA/LSO in its convention resolutions and its publications as a whole, before he leaped to a sweeping conclusion."

What has Germain failed to note? In particular they bring to his attention a peculiar incident covered in *Labor Challenge* which we commented on earlier in this document as an example of how our line has changed — the Mack/Addison expulsions (*from the NDP —ed.*) A more suspicious mind than our own, seeing how extremely fortuitous this incident proves to be for the Young/Riddell line of argument, might suspect that it was actually set up to order.

Young/Riddell triumphantly point to this attack on our movement by the provincial secretary of the Ontario NDP — "one of the leaders whom the LSA/LSO is accused (by Germain) of supporting uncritically."

The reader will recall that the editor of our press, proscribed by the Ontario NDP leadership some years back, sent what Young/Riddell describe as a "routine request for advertising space in the NDP newspaper." The NDP provincial secretary noted in his reply, which for some reason we published **in toto** in *Labor Challenge*, that he was not, as to be expected, accepting "any advertising for the *New Democrat* which is contrary to the policies and traditions of the party". This portion of the letter is left out of the version appearing in the international bulletin, although there would appear to be no space problem.

For some unexplained reason, along with the letter requesting advertising space for our proscribed paper, which is quite well known to the NDP leadership, we enclosed a copy. It just happened to be the issue which reproduced that portion of our political resolution which detailed, as Marxist-Leninists, our fundamental and principled opposition to the NDP as a "social democratic labor party".

This — what Young/Riddell describe as a "routine request for advertising space in the NDP newspaper" — was not sent in the name of our paper's business manager but for some reason by our new editor who is well known to the NDP provincial secretary as a leading public figure in the anti-war movement and a member of the NDP. The result of this "routine request" handled in such a "routine" way was the expulsion of our new editor.

How could Germain "miss the clear line of revolutionary criticism of the NDP in *Labor Challenge* which so annoyed" the Ontario NDP provincial secretary, Young/Riddell ask? "Is it because the paragraph in *Labor Challenge* quoted by Vlchert," from the political resolution, they ask, "reflects some change in line by the LSA/LSO?" The Political Resolution, presented in a routine way to the LSA convention is given special weight in the Young/Riddell argument. A little further down, they refer to the political resolution as

"an up-to-date and authoritative statement of the LSA/ LSO leadership's policy." Having conceded the correctness of the criticisms Germain made of two items, they present other items which they say carry the correct line, preceding this evidence with the statement: "Nor did the Political Resolution add anything new to the public positions of Canadian Trotskyism in this respect. . ."

But before proceeding along this line, perhaps we should examine more closely the actual evidence presented by Germain which he alleges proves our movement has a position on the NDP which is "a clear tailist deviation from Leninism." The simple fact that Young and Riddell plead guilty on our behalf should not cause us to automatically accept that plea. Neither of the offending items, the YS leaflet nor the *Labor Challenge* article was written by them. We are all familiar with capitalist institutions that plead guilty to minor infractions in order to get off, to cover up major crimes. Does this hasty plea have bigger implications than would first meet the eye?

According to Young/Riddell "there is no question that these criticisms are absolutely correct. . ." that the passages Germain refers to in the YS leaflet and the *Labor Challenge* article, "do not advance a revolutionary critique of the social democratic leadership of the NDP...."

THE YOUNG SOCIALIST'S LEAFLET

The first matter we will examine is the leaflet which our youth comrades carried into the most dynamic, although the most politically inexperienced sector of the radicalization. It is addressed in particular to the 2.8 million youth who had the vote for the first time in that election.

Is the YS leaflet an obvious aberration of our line? Does it contain a number of erroneous formulations which could be said to add up to a violation of our longstanding orientation to the NDP? In the case of the *Labor Challenge* article, Young and Riddell take pains to say that the editorial board recognized it as faulty and corrected it in the next issue. But in the case of the YS leaflet we are not given even the slightest suggestion as to what is wrong with it.

Young and Riddell plead guilty on behalf of the LSA – in this case on behalf of the Young Socialists. Thus we are all to conclude that the YS leaflet is a violation of our NDP orientation, or at the very least (not explained to us) that it is not a worthy example of the implementation of our orientation.

Is there any truth at all in Germain's charge that the YS leaflet abstains from revolutionary propaganda against the NDP leadership? Does it present a line that even implies that a fundamental change, that a break from capitalism as a system can be realized by the masses through an electoral victory of the NDP? We of the LPT - Labor

Party Tendency – completely deny this. We think that it is a good, competent and generally correct implementation of our orientation. And on behalf of the YS and the Canadian Trotskyist movement, we reverse the Young/Riddell plea to Germain's charge, to **not** guilty.

That is not to say that there are no errors in it, or that it could not be improved. For instance we would have asked the YS to consider editing out the word "our" party in reference to the NDP in the sixth paragraph quoted by Germain. But even there a good defence could be marshalled for its retention. For as the leaflet points out, the Young Socialists "are the only active youth movement that supports the NDP." And as the Political Resolution states, "the NDP is the political expression of the political consciousness of the working class. . . and. . . poses to the class the need of replacing the government of the capitalists with a workers' government." There is even some tactical advantage for the independent YS, in the absence of an official NDP youth movement, to talk of the NDP as "our party". All the more is this so, we might add, when the tiny Canadian Trotskyist movement, confronted with the massive New Democratic Party, quite correctly calls its organization a league, and not a party.

GERMAIN'S SLIGHT OMISSION

In the quite normal desire to defend our movement and our orientation to the NDP from Germain's assault, we took the trouble to look up the YS leaflet. Germain's quotation from the leaflet includes a section that reads: "the NDP has limitations. Its conservative leadership wants to reform this profit system, not end it. The leadership also sees the parliamentary road as the only road for change, and they sometimes even oppose demonstrations, mass meetings and strikes, etc. . ." It was this, along with other sections of the leaflet that caused Germain to say that the *Labor Challenge* article is even more guilty of his charge than the YS leaflet. But Germain suddenly ends his quotation from the leaflet **before** the following:

"That's what the Young Socialists is all about. We are the only active youth movement that supports the NDP. And we're out to organize a movement of thousands of youth who are fighting for a better world 365 days of a year, inside and outside the NDP, and determined to use any means necessary, not just elections. . . We're serious about changing the world. And we know that it will take nothing short of a socialist revolution – a complete restructuring of society – to end the injustice, irrationality and brutality of this system. Because it is building the independent power of the oppressed, the campaign to elect the NDP is part of that process. The struggle for change takes a lot of effort and a lot of people. But the future of all of us rests upon it. We need your help. If you think we are right in what we're doing, you should join us. Join us in campaigning for an NDP government. Join us in fighting for a socialist world."

The constant repetition of "us" refers of course, not to the NDP, but to the Canadian Trotskyist youth organization, the Young Socialists. The back page of the leaflet contains a YS membership application form, a list of all the addresses of YS locals and an advertisement and subscription form for the *Young Socialist* and *Labor Challenge*.

In our opinion this leaflet, directed to the youth of Canada, particularly to the 2.8 million who for the first time had the vote, and not solely to the vanguard and what it considers to be its particular concerns apart from the problem of mobilizing the class, is a competent one. Within the space available, it is quite clear on the crisis of leadership, on parliamentarism, and electoralism, and projects our orientation to the NDP with considerable skill.

Since an examination of the leaflet, even without the part that Germain unfortunately omitted, proves the utter falseness of his charge, we must turn to Young and Riddell and ask them, why they pleaded guilty on our behalf. They must tell us what is wrong with this leaflet, not with just a word here or there but what is wrong with it in substance. What criticisms made by Germain are "absolutely correct!" What formulations, in the passages, even those quoted by Germain, are erroneous?

Germain characterizes the portion of the YS leaflet he quotes as "astonishing prose" before he proceeds to deal with his quotation from *Labor Challenge*. He does not elucidate what he means by the word "astonishing", as if it is obvious. But he does go to the trouble of italicizing three sentences to bring them to our attention.

The paragraph preceding the start of his quote had a subhead "Who Will Rule Canada." The paragraph within the quote, prior to the italicized section had a subhead "The Corporations . . ." And the italicized section had a subhead: ". . . or us!" Thus the leaflet attempts to pose the class question, the various struggles of the working class and the role the various parties play in these struggles.

The three sentences that Germain calls to our special attention read:

"The NDP can propel them forward. An NDP victory would inspire and intensify the different movements of the oppressed. A Labor government could win concrete gains for the working people and open the way for fundamental social change."

To Germain's charge and to Young and Riddell's plea of guilty, we must reply, that not only the rest of the YS leaflet but these three sentences too, are by no means an aberration in the application by the YS or the LSA of our longstanding orientation to the NDP. Quite the contrary. The leaflet is a competent application of our basic orientation to the NDP. In his selection of this particular YS leaflet Germain has by no means taken unfair advantage. He has not, by chance, hit us at some weak spot. Quite the contrary. He has hit at our orientation —squarely!

BEHIND THE DISAVOWAL OF THE YS LEAFLET

If, as we claim, the YS leaflet does generally correctly articulate our orientation, Young and Riddell as spokesmen of the LSA are required to defend it.

If it does not, they are required to explain how it does not articulate our line, and perhaps even more important, why this could happen. Of course, there is another possible explanation that lurks behind an acceptance of Germain's criticism. That is, that in the intervening time Young and Riddell have come to agree that there is some basic weakness in our orientation, which has certainly been under an unprecedented attack on all fronts. But of course, if that were so they should say so openly, not indulge in self-criticism, but to help the movement correct or even change its orientation.

As for Germain's criticism of the *Labor Challenge* article of September 27, 1972, we concur with one aspect of his criticism – that this article "doesn't contain a single word of criticism of reformism and electoralism, not a single word of differentiation from social democracy." This is so much the worse, as some comrades now in the Labor Party Tendency pointed out at the time, when you know that the NDP brass had just driven the left wing Waffle out of the ranks of the party.

Young and Riddell immediately accept this criticism and rapidly move off this article to point to other articles — two in the August 21st issue, another in the September 25th issue and another in an October issue, to demonstrate that the September 27 article was just an inexplicable error.

Germain recognizes that the error is such an obvious one that it must be "A-B-C for the leadership of the LSA as well." "Why then," he continues, "do they write the exact opposite to what they believe on these questions?" Young and Riddell do not answer this question. They plead guilty to his charge, and so they too pass off the error as an inexplicable one.

However that error, and a series of the same kind of errors were committed in the period when the Waffle left wing was headed out of the NDP and we were under increasing ultra-left pressure from the Red Circle and the RCT. As we noted previously, Harry Knight in Bulletin 54 outlined the PC majority's record of zig-zags and adaptations "both to the left and the right". This "zig" that Germain picked up in order to attack our orientation, as Knight pointed out, was a "by-product of the PC majority's mission against the Waffle's supposed cop-out on socialism. . . ." As Knight points out "the euphoric lapses in our press, the muting of our criticism of the NDP leadership. . . cannot be explained in any other context."

This question disappears under the rug and Young and Riddell sweep on, ignoring the emphasis that Germain makes of certain sentences in the *Labor Challenge* editorial.

Germain singles out these sentences as additional proof that the LSA/LSO's position is a "clear tailist deviation from Leninism."

One sentence reads: "but the election of NDP governments to power constitutes big strides in the path that the working class of this country are going to take **towards breaking not only from the capitalist electoral politics but from capitalism as a system.**" (Germain's emphasis.)

The other sentence that Germain brings to our attention reads: "Through the NDP the lessons of the radicalization amongst the youth, in the women's liberation movement, the lessons of the Quebec and Native libation struggles, are being transmitted to, discussed and debated among the advanced workers of the country. It is through the NDP that the political consciousness of the working class in Canada is being forged and shaped.

YOUNG-RIDDELL REPUDIATE OUR ORIENTATION

Young and Riddell concede that certain of Germain's criticisms are "absolutely correct". Do they include the criticisms of the italicized portions within this category of "absolutely correct"? And when Young and Riddell say that "the passages argue that an NDP victory would propel the class struggle forward which is by no means guaranteed in advance," are they referring to the italicized sections as well?

Germain's implied criticisms through the italicization of these sentences cannot be sloughed aside so lightly. These passages have nothing at all to do with guarantees in advance. They express how we see the class struggle and through what forms we see it advancing over the next period in this country. They are a projection of an orientation. Furthermore, that is exactly how Germain takes them on, in his later comments. Where precisely, we must ask, do Young and Riddell stand on these italicized sections that Germain attacks? The LPT stands by them!

There is neither time nor space at this time to comment on the other aspects of Germain's attack on our orientation that immediately follows. We think, from the above comments, that it is quite clear that Young and Riddell have not defended our orientation as it has been established over the years. Quite the contrary. Their failure to do so, their headlong retreat before Germain's attack which is substantially the same as the attack by the RCT which they failed to answer, leads us to conclude that on the terms that we have always understood it, they think our NDP orientation is indefensible. One is led to conclude that they themselves have come to question that orientation and are now in the process of revising it to such an extent, as recent coverage in our press shows, that they have actually abandoned our orientation to the mass labor party.

We will now move on to that part of the Young-Riddell reply to Germain that is titled "II. Towards Discussing the Real Issues. Subsection I. Some starting Points for an NDP Debate". But first let us pause to get some perspective.

The previous sections of this document were developed within the framework of the common experience, understanding and implementation of our orientation to the CCF/NDP. This orientation commenced to find concrete expression over 20 years ago when the Trotskyist movement concluded that the CCF was a labor party formation (1948) and it moved towards making an entry into it (1952). This whole experience was tersely summed up in the document "Our Orientation to the NDP; The Strategy and its tactical application, (1970) now referred to by Young and Riddell for some unexplained reason as simply "Our Orientation to the NDP".

Our movement, like all other Canadian political bodies, has an orientation, and has positioned itself in relation to the CCF/NDP. Since 1952, Canadian Trotskyism has had what it has called a **strategic** orientation to the Canadian labor party formation, both during its CCF and its NDP phases. We have not conceived of it as a tactic, and the CCF/NDP just another work area, even if perhaps a more important one. This strategic or long range orientation has been the framework within which we have employed several widely differing tactics. These have included an entry, in the process of which we gave up our entire public face, including our press. These tactics, which have at one time seen us direct all the energies of our open organization and press to the CCF/NDP, and under different circumstances, saw us direct almost our entire energies outside of and independently of the CCF/NDP, were all worked out in the light of the varied concrete situations that confronted us and were all designed to build the Trotskyist movement.

We have made this longstanding strategic orientation of our movement the framework of our argument in this document, not because of any maudlin or sentimental attachment to our past but because it expresses the hard fought lessons of the past and is the promise of future gains. Of course it might be that recent developments have already proven the inadequacy of our previous concepts or are posing problems that some comrades may think are proving such an inadequacy. For instance the NDP is not only in office in the Prairie provinces of Manitoba and Saskatchewan but also in BC, and it is quite possible we will have a labor government in Ontario within the next three or four years. Although we should note that if this poses problems, they are not exactly new ones for us since the CCF was elected to office in Saskatchewan back in 1944. But perhaps we have been hewing to a strategy of some 20 years duration that is based on a false methodology that only now for some reason is becoming clear.

If, for whatever reason, Trotskyists come to think that previous longstanding central concepts of their movement are proving to be inadequate and needing to be developed, given new emphasis; or if they think they are proving to be wrong in life, they commence

in a responsible way (above all to preserve what is useful from the past) to make whatever adjustments or changes may be necessary. They make this process an experience of the movement as a whole. They don't do it behind the backs of the movement, but openly and above board. If differences commence over the use of terminology or formulations, they attempt to take it off this plane and to get to the very essence of the problem. They present an accurate picture of what our position has been, outline the error, and if it involves something substantial, for instance an error in theory, they attempt to trace it to its origin and draw it to its full conclusions. To do otherwise is to risk setting off a tremendous process of miss-education among the cadre.

In the summer and fall of 1972 some comrades, then in the United Tendency, noted what they considered to be zigzags and "adaptation both to the left and to the right," on the part of the Central Office leadership with regards to the NDP. Even more alarming, all during the pre-convention period in the face of the all-out assault on our NDP orientation, first by the Unified Minority Tendency and then by the Revolutionary Communist Tendency, the leadership remained silent. Following the convention some comrades began to develop an uneasy feeling that some articles on the NDP appearing in our press were not expressing our orientation. Shortly, in their opinion, these articles began to reveal a distinct trend, constituting in their totality an abandonment of our orientation.

After protesting about some of the articles Comrade R. Dowson asked the leadership to present a document to the movement developing their views on our NDP orientation. The Lambertists (*Trotskyist current outside the FI based in France with a small force in Canada* –ed.) were openly stating in their press, *Labor Action*, that the LSA had changed its line on the NDP. And ex-RCTers, now RMGers, were wryly commenting that the RCT line document on the NDP that had been rejected by the LSA-LSO convention was now the line being carried by *Labor Challenge*.

Some LSA-LSO Central Office leaders began to suggest that the 1970 document has some significant shortcomings, that there are terminological problems, and conceded that there were errors in this or that *Labor Challenge* article. But they denied that there was any pattern, and vigorously denied that they were changing our line on the NDP or were even intending to do so. They asked Dowson to present a written detailed critique of the various contentious articles.

Dowson demurred. He said that he did not consider it his responsibility to ferret out and record a process that he considered to be transparently dear. He suggested that this would not be the proper way to proceed, particularly as it would put him, former Executive Secretary, against the leadership in the eyes of the movement. He proposed that the CO (*Central Office*) leadership, whatever the reason for not having done so before, should at long last present the now obviously needed document on the NDP. No moves were made

to do so. The process continued in the pages of *Labor Challenge*, and a group of comrades decided to form the Labor Party Tendency.

Do we merely have a series of errors appearing in *Labor Challenge*, which show no pattern or direction, that should be brought to the attention of the editorial board for rectification? And do we merely have the dropping of a number of words and phrases that have nothing to do with the essence of our orientation, and should be cleaned up? Quite the contrary! We think it obvious from the limited amount of material that we have noted and commented upon here in this document that *Labor Challenge* articles show a clear trend towards a sectarian revision of our longstanding strategic orientation and in their totality constitute an abandonment of our orientation to the mass labor party. The elimination of a whole series of words, phrases, formulations that we have heretofore used to describe and define our orientation, particularly in the 1970 document, reflect and express a change in the content, the essence of our longstanding orientation to the NDP.

The above material could be said to fall in the category of circumstantial evidence of a change in line. Aside from the Political Resolution which we have shown to be largely irrelevant in this respect, there has been no documentary expression of the recent thinking of the CO leadership. But now we have before us a document authored by Comrades Young and Riddell, "The Real Record of the Canadian Section — In reply to Comrade Germain," and in particular that section of the document titled "Some Starting Points for an NDP Debate."

At first glance the title "Some Starting Points for an NDP Debate" is puzzling. One would anticipate that our reply would be a clear and precise outline and defence of our longstanding position on the CCF/NDP which Germain claims expresses a tailist deviation from Leninism, that it would develop our view of our orientation as expounded in the 1970 convention document *Our Orientation to the NDP; the Strategy and its Tactical Application*. After all , it is that document that the RCT specifically assailed and which is of particular concern to Germain and the International since it is our contribution to the international discussion on entry *sui generis*. Why don't we start from there?

One would expect a title more along the line of "Tailism or Revolutionary Intervention – more on Canadian Trotskyist Practice." But it turns out upon examination that the Young/Riddell contribution is more or less correctly titled. It is certainly not an explanation and defence of the LSA/LSO's orientation to the NDP.

This section of the document is truly and quite uniquely a contribution of Comrades Young and Riddell for it addresses itself to our orientation in such a way as has never, up until October 1973 (its date of publication) been discussed on any official level of the Canadian movement with the possible exception of the Political Bureau. At long last we have some configurations, some sketchy outlines of the thinking of some leading

comrades – the Executive Secretary and the Organizational Secretary of the LSA-LSO. They appear for the first time, not in a bulletin of the LSA/LSO, not in a discussion on any level of the Canadian movement, but in the final days of a hectic discussion preparatory to the world congress in an international discussion bulletin, and thus with a highly official status as the Canadian movement's views.

This section of the Young/Riddell contribution starts off from certain basic fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism as to the essential nature of social democracy and reformism. It touches on the treacherous role of social democracy as an ideological force – as a transmission belt for bourgeois ideology. As an organisational force it puts social democracy in **historic** terms, as "detour for the English Canadian working class", not an unuseful metaphor since all contemporary history proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that a revolutionary vanguard party is a life and death matter and must be built as best possible now!

It is often good to go back to basic principles, to be constantly alerted to the danger of adaptationism and tailism that confronts Trotskyists, particularly where there is a labor party formation which because of its centrality in the radicalization, figures large in their work to build the revolutionary vanguard party.

However, it is not clear as to their relevancy in what Young and Riddell call "an NDP debate" that they initiate with this section. As such, it is certainly not involved in the debate that we have had with the Revolutionary Communist Tendency and its line document authored by Gandal, except in the most indirect way. The RCT was particularly strong in emphasizing these basic fundamentals. In fact they accused the LSA/LSO, in the process of what they alleged to be a liquidationist approach to the NDP, of being led to some serious theoretical revisions of these very first principles. However, in our opinion the problem was the other way around — not at all unexpected when revolutionary socialists are generally isolated from the class and under heavy ultra-left pressure. With the RCT these first principles, these formulations, tended to substitute for a real, a specific appraisal of the NDP as an expression of social democracy. Failing that, they proved unable to arrive at a correct orientation to it.

In fact we can say that ignorance of these basic Marxist-Leninist concepts is not the problem with our opponents on the left. The problem with the Maoists, the CP, and now even with some important forces in the Waffle, is not their unfamiliarity with, or ignorance of the historic role of reformism and social democracy. Instead of demonstrating to the workers who are under the influence of the social democratic misleaders how (what we revolutionists know to be) first principles are being proven in life itself; instead of patiently proving in life itself the correctness of the theory, they have turned it into a dogma. It is this elevation of these concepts to the ethereal realm of

dogma which has made it impossible for our opponents on the left to take a correct position on the concrete expression of reformism – social democracy in Canada.

Nor does this approach appear, certainly at this time, to be very relevant in a debate with Germain. While it is sometimes a good tactic to draw out differences and to thereby warn of their inner logic, it also has the grave danger of covering over or confusing the real differences. It is hard to believe, certainly at this time, that Young and Riddell are serious when they question: "Comrade Germain expresses no opinion on whether the LSA-LSO is correct to utilize the tactic of critical support to the NDP."

The problem for the LSA-LSO, under the pressure of our opponents on the left, is to retain our dialectical definition of the NDP, our concrete appraisal of its internal dynamics and its role in the radicalization, to retain our active and not waiting policy, in a word our orientation to the NDP. What is at stake is not first principles but our orientation.

In the belief that it flows inevitably and logically from these first principles, the RCT took us into what is a counter-productive debate - and others have followed them into it - as to whether we Trotskyists of the independently structured LSA-LSO are opposed to the NDP or whether we support the NDP. Some comrades state that as a political organization we are opposed to the NDP, we are opposed, period, and no "ifs," "ands" or "buts."

This is a rather difficult concept to grasp since leading LSA activists favor and fight in union locals for affiliation to the NDP and from time to time LSA representatives call for the NDP's election to office, even egging it on to contest municipal office. It is all the more difficult to grasp in the light of our policy that all comrades who are able, hold membership in the NDP and, when it seems favorable, actively participate in it, even assuming posts in its provincial executive bodies.

Obviously such formulations are not adequate to present our stance to the NDP, and on closer examination that also holds for the concept that the NDP is a detour even historically. A detour eventually gets you to the same destination as the main road, in this case, we assume, the socialist revolution. But we know that the road of the revolutionary vanguard, the road of class struggle, is the only road, and that social democracy (class collaboration) is not just a slower, round-about or circuitous route. If the NDP is only a detour, perhaps for some reason we might actually consider taking it. The problem is — it never arrives at the socialist revolution.

The first striking feature of the Young/Riddell document is that it is not placed within the framework of our orientation as it has heretofore been generally understood by our cadre. The concepts of our movement that present us as supporting the NDP as a political party, which has heretofore been the main emphasis of our orientation, are missing. All the

words, the phrases and concepts that we have up until now employed to express our orientation are gone. The main slant of the Young-Riddell document is that the NDP is an obstacle and that the LSA-LSO opposes the NDP as a political party. Our concept of its role — we don't want to haggle over words but — as we expressed it in the 1970 document as being both "in the way and on the way" to the Canadian socialist revolution, is notably missing. Not only are the words gone but so is the concept.

From reading the Young/Riddell document one could not even say that the LSA-LSO has an orientation to the NDP in any meaning of the word, let alone what we have heretofore called a strategic or long range orientation to the NDP which expresses the organic nature of the ties between our tasks and the main political vehicle of rising class consciousness in Canada. They present our position as being merely one of a tactical attitude to the NDP.

Here is how they sum it up: "the present orientation of the LSA/LSO consists of critical support to the NDP as the mass political party of the English Canadian labor movement. It is not an entry into the NDP. It entails the work of a portion of LSA members (fraction work) inside the NDP, and an orientation of intervening in the politics of the NDP and the labor movement through independent activity outside the NDP; independent propaganda, independent mass campaigns on particular issues, and all the public activity of the LSA. Thus we intervene in the politics of the NDP both within the NDP, within the unions and from the outside.

The balance of the different sides of this work depends on the political conjuncture. Its aim is not to build a centrist or left centrist current in the NDP. Its aim is to increase the working class influence and build the cadres of the Canadian Trotskyist movement."

The presentation of our orientation by Riddell and Young while in some points more or less formally correct is really a caricature of our orientation in such gross outlines as to be scarcely attributable to the real thing.

Is it possible to describe our past and present relation to the NDP, since there has been no documentation to project a new relationship, unless we actually say we do have a new one, as being one of critical support? The position of critical support is the position of all currents of the left, with the possible exception of the Communist Party of Canada, (Marxist-Leninist). Our position has been one of a much more profound relation, one might even say identification with the NDP in every sense, in all our tactics.

Only three years ago, the 1970 document expressed it as "one of unconditional support and intensive fraction work with a non-split perspective." Our line has been not to run against the NDP in elections. Of course there have been exceptions, the last in Quebec where the NDP is no significant factor, but these exceptions only serve to prove the rule. When the NDP does not contest an election and we do, we generally identify our

campaign with the need for independent labor political action, and so direct our campaign as to identify it in the public mind with the NDP.

If there is one aspect of Canadian Trotskyism that stands out in the minds of the forces of the left and differentiates us from our organized opponents on the left, it is our support of the NDP. So much is this a part of our movement that some comrades of the Labor Party Tendency thought that the LSA leadership, including Young and Riddell, went so far on a crucial occasion as to make a "fetish" of the NDP. At the time that the Waffle under the assault of the Lewis leadership was clearly moving outside of the ranks of the NDP in the direction of building an independent party, we drew a line of blood between ourselves and them around the demand "Stay In and Fight".

We do not want to haggle over words but in our opinion our 1970 document did not err in stating that our orientation was one of unconditional support of the NDP, and of course critical. It could not be understood to be anything else than critical since we sustain an independent organization and press which carries the full program of the proletarian revolution and identifies itself with the Fourth International. Alas, some comrades have found a dictionary that defines the word unconditional as "absolute". And of course, as Marxists, rejecting all absolutes, they now call this word into question. But there is no question at all about the main thrust of our orientation to the NDP. It has not been critical so much as it has laid down no conditions before the NDP that qualify our support of it as a political party for some 12 years now since it was founded.

It is true that our position vis-à-vis the NDP is not that of entry at this time, although we should keep it in mind that we may well enter the NDP in the future. But is it possible with any kind of exactitude to say as do Young and Riddell that our orientation "entails the work of a portion of the LSA (fraction work) inside the NDP." The fact is that all members of the LSA, except those who we know in advance would automatically be barred, are expected to automatically take out a membership in the NDP.

One could say with some justification that NDP membership is a condition of membership in the LSA and the YS. That it is not a formal condition of membership is due to the fact that the NDP is so central to all our work and propaganda, even during a period when we are doing little in the constituency organizations, that anyone coming around us and joining us cannot help but understand that they should hold membership in the NDP. Since formal identification with the LSA almost automatically brings expulsion from the NDP, the extent of public identification that a comrade may have with the LSA is a matter of some concern in the deployment of our forces – who speaks officially on behalf of the LSA, who sells our press and where, and with how much identification, etc., etc.

To say, as do Young and Riddell, that a portion of LSA members do fraction work in the NDP, is an incredible understatement. Revolutionary socialists, if they had the forces, would do fraction work in a great number of organizations and movements, anywhere and any place where we might get a hearing, including church organizations. We have described our fraction work in the NDP in quite a different way than Young and Riddell now describe it. In the 1970 document we said we conduct "intensive fraction work with a non-split perspective" in the NDP. We do not want to haggle over words but in what way do these words, written only three years ago not accurately describe our orientation in this respect? We have no objection to trying to find other, better words to express it, but Young and Riddell's words give quite a false impression of our orientation to the NDP.

In our 1970 document we noted that for a whole period the youth radicalization unfolded outside of the NDP and was only indirectly reflected within it. Thus we noted that our 1966 resolution described the implementation of our orientation as follows: "It means that the NDP remains the focus of all our politics — but not the center of our activities." This remains a generally accurate formulation of our orientation.

To say that "we intervene in the politics of the NDP . . . within the unions" is formally correct, but it does not accurately explain that intervention. It could truthfully be said by opponents of the NDP, both its scattering of left opponents and it's still numerous right wing opponents, that the Trotskyists intervene as supporters of the NDP, even as the best, the most committed supporters of the concept of independent labor, NDP, political action.

Historically, as a social democratic party, the NDP is fated to betray the socialist revolution and thus the working class. Its future betrayal is clearly forecast in its present, making NDPers, as their experiences widen with the crisis of capitalism ever more open to recruitment to Trotskyism. However, in urging union affiliation, we of necessity have to emphasize good positions in the party program, including good positions taken by the party leadership now, reluctantly or not. We cannot limit ourselves to pie-in-the-sky abstract possibilities that this reformist party has, should the working class flood into the constituency associations and the union political education committees. How else could we carry an argument? It would be quite a feat to argue union affiliation to the NDP if besides its historic position being one of betrayal of the working class, its program, as now understood, and its leadership, were now perceived as bankrupt by any sizeable, viable sector of the working masses. Then, it would indeed be tailism. Today, when the Liberals and Tories still have the adherence of the majority of the working class who concern themselves with politics, to support the NDP is in the framework of revolutionary socialist politics.

Within the NDP itself where our comrades seek to propagandize our transitional and democratic demands We attempt to build a left wing. During the 1966-68 period we were

quite successful in gathering leftward moving NDPers around us on a basic minimum program. The Socialist Caucus had 30 to 40 delegates at the 1965 federal convention and its six point program was endorsed by, among others, the senior NDP M.P. Bert Herridge. The Ontario Socialist Caucus at the 1966 convention ran a slate of four candidates for the executive who received 20% of the vote – its candidate for party treasurer also won 20% of the vote. The 1968 Ontario convention Socialist Caucus meeting rallied up to 100 delegates and there were effective formations in both Alberta and BC.

We have described the program of such caucuses in which we played the leading role as being a class struggle program with a socialist perspective. Of course, as Young and Riddell state, our "aim is not to build a centrist or left centrist current in the NDP." That begs the question. We want a broad class struggle left wing within which we can move and where we can hope to find recruits for the proscribed LSA. What would such a left wing be if it were not "centrist or left centrist" at the very best? What we rejected in the debated with the Red Circle, and the RCT that agreed with them, was the idea of launching a struggle in the NDP designed to regroup what they call revolutionary elements around what they call an explicit, revolutionary program. Not because we are opposed in principle to raising our full program but because at best it would add almost nothing to the forces of the LSA already inside the NDP — it would be a regroupment of "Trotskyists", a pitifully small force struggling against a reformist machine for leadership of a mass labor party.

It is not at all clear what Young and Riddell mean when they say that our aim, that the aim of our tiny forces in the mass labor party formation, "is to increase the working class influence," unless this is some kind of euphemism for increasing the influence of our Marxist program which alone expressed the interests of the working class. After all, the NDP is based on the working class and there is considerable working class weight in it, unfortunately — but it is a fact — by no means exercising a radical influence on NDP policy for some period now. No matter how you examine Young and Riddell's explanation of what they call "our present orientation," in this respect too it is by no means an accurate presentation of what it has been; and as a projection can only orient our forces.

The slogan "Win the NDP to Socialism" defended in our 1970 document came under heavy attack from the RCT. Its absence from Riddell's and Young's outline of "the present orientation of the LSA/LSO" could be due to a number of reasons. But it is quite clear that they do not defend it. It has already been pulled down from LSA halls and another substituted in its place: "Fight for socialist policies in the NDP."

Slogans are only approximations and often only express our views for a limited period. The slogan "Fight for socialist policies in the NDP" would appear to be much more in keeping with a tactical attitude to the NDP than what we have called our strategic

orientation to the NDP. It is in keeping with a portion of LSA members doing fraction work with a short term split perspective, and not with all LSAers possible holding NDP membership and doing fraction work with a non-split perspective.

In the slogan "Fight for socialist policies in the NDP" could we not just as easily substitute for the letters NDP the name of almost any other organization in which we might have a portion of comrades doing fraction work? This latter slogan contains no concept of how the LSA as an independent and public expression of Trotskyism has always understood the centrality of the NDP to all its work. It gives no guidance to comrades working in the NDP and to persons who may be coming our way. Instead of posing a struggle for the leadership of the class against the liberal-reformist NDP leadership, it poses a fight for undefined policies for an undefined period. As for the RCT's claim that the slogan "Win the NDP to Socialism" appearing on the walls and press of the Trotskyist cadre organization, spreads illusions about the NDP – that we think the NDP actually can make the revolution – is this to be taken any more seriously than claims that many other slogans we have promoted such as "For a Red University", "For a Labor Administration in City Hall", etc. spread illusions about the essential nature of the university and the nature of city hall, a bourgeois institution?

(Again,) we don't want to haggle over words, but whatever the shortcomings of "Win the NDP to Socialism" the slogan "Fight for Socialist Policies in the NDP" is not a substitute. Quite the contrary. The latter slogan would flow logically from a policy of abandonment of our longstanding orientation to the NDP.

Young and Riddell affirm that our orientation to the NDP is not one of "an entry into the NDP." Elsewhere they say that the Canadian movement is opposed to entry *"sui generis"*. The term entry *"sui generis"* means an entry of a special type, different from entries into reformist formations that had been established as correct previously by our movement such as Trotsky's proposal that the French comrades enter the French SP (*Socialist Party*), and the experience of the SWP with the Socialist Party of the US in the thirties. The trouble with entry *sui generis* is that there is no common concept of what it means. It is very difficult to reject out of hand what is called on entry of a special type. What the Canadian Trotskyists rejected was how some Canadian supporters of entry *sui generis* conceived of it at a certain time in Canada. It turned out that what they proposed we should practise was liquidationism into the reformist labor party. We also rejected it as we come to understand how many of our European comrades practised it for a period.

We have never at any time described or conceived our orientation to the NDP as an entry — either of a special type or as an entry of any other kind. It is an orientation, within which for a time we happened to conduct on entry, but it itself is not an entry into, but an orientation to the NDP.

When the Canadian labor party took on the form of the NDP we actually strengthened and firmed up the public and independent expressions of Canadian Trotskyism to where we now publish a monthly youth paper and two twice monthly papers, one in English and the other in French.

But having said that, we should not at all pretend that the NDP is just an important work area and that we have had merely a tactical stance to the NDP/CCF now for some two decades. It is within that framework, in harmony with the RCT is line he supports, that Germain attacks our orientation. And we must say that this is the framework accepted by Young and Riddell in their reply. It is quite misleading to pretend that the Canadian Trotskyists have been functioning in their relationship to the labor party formation in their country in much the same way as some other Trotskyist organizations where there are also labor party or social democratic party formations, for instance, in the same way as the International Marxist Group in Great Britain where there is a powerful labor party formation.

The Canadian Trotskyists do not have a relationship to the NDP that parallels in any way the relationship that we understand the IMG has to the British Labor Party. Nearly all comrades belong to the Canadian labor party, some today are very active within it, hold leading posts in it and are not publicly known as members of the LSA-LSO. Because the League is a proscribed organization by the NDP brass, many comrades use pseudonyms in their internal work in the League.

The League does not parade around with the banner of the Fourth International or wave the hammer and sickle at every opportunity. It does not declare here, there and everywhere that it is the Canadian Section of the Fourth International. While it doesn't hide it, it doesn't headline it either, and has followed a policy, while adhering to the line of the Fourth International, of publishing all the official statements of the Fourth International as information to its readers. It has given up some of the forms of other Trotskyist sections all the better to employ the essence of Trotskyism in the Canadian context.

We should not cloud this question by assuming an "orthodox" front, by presenting our orientation in quite a different frame of reference than it has been. We should communicate our experience to all the sections of the Fourth International as we did by submitting our 1970 document to the world discussion. We should defend our position as it has been.

Young and Riddell, all the more in the light of these comments, may object that their "Some Starting Points for an NDP Debate" with Comrade Germain, is an insufficient document. We agree completely. However, while it is insufficient it is regrettably all that they have given us as to their thinking or the direction of their thinking.

The Young/Riddell document suddenly appearing in the international discussion dealing with a fundamental aspect of our work, over which there has been developing unease during the past year, unhappily confirms our worst fears. Our failure to make any gains from the Waffle left wing experience in the NDP, and the inevitable questioning that this would give rise about our orientation, the increasing pressure of ultraleftism on our movement, the development of an ultraleft current within our ranks which centred its attack on our NDP orientation, posed serious challenges to us. The response of the central leadership failed to defend our orientation. Rather, our press, with growing frequency, has published a whole series of articles showing a clear trend to a sectarian revision of our line amounting to an abandonment of our orientation.

Although grave damage has been done to our orientation, there is still time to call a halt. The red lights are flashing. The comrades who have united in the Labor Party Tendency are alarmed at this process of abandonment of our NDP orientation, the most important acquisition of Canadian Trotskyism, an orientation that remains the fundamental cornerstone of non-sectarian revolutionary politics. We must note that the direction that the LSA-LSO is moving in on this most important question unleashes a certain dynamic – one which will necessarily lead to a qualitative transformation of the LSA-LSO.

January, 1974

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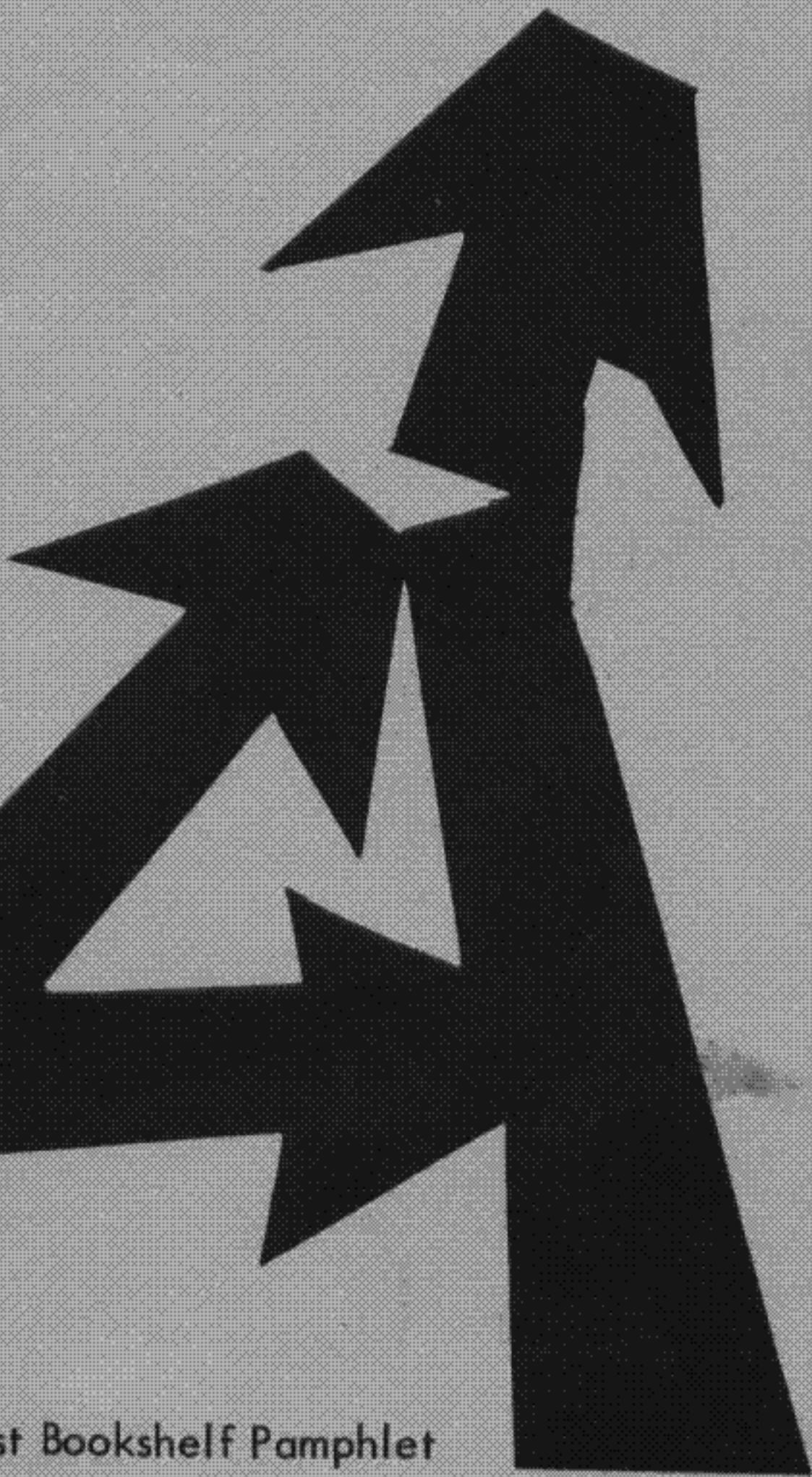
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against sectarianism

the challenge of the labor party

BY

W. SHIER
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Against Sectarianism: the challenge of the labor party

By W. Shier, A. Levi & J. Jennings* (*the viewpoint of three leading members of the newly-formed Socialist League after the break from the League for Socialist Action in March 1974 –ed. *pseudonyms for Wayne R., Abie W. & Jim M. –ed.*)

(Preface)

This is a contribution about the key question facing socialists in Canada today – the NDP, Canada's labor party. The work is addressed to those who see the need for a total restructuring of society through revolutionary change, and who know the necessity for a correct strategy to bring that about. It is published as a contribution to the ongoing discussion in the left. The authors are associated with the Socialist League (*known as the Forward Group from 1977*)

(Quotation sources referred to by numbers in the text will be found at the end of the text.)

AGAINST SECTARIANISM

Since the 1870's, when the working class of Canada began to take shape as a class, with its own concepts, recognizing its separate identity and Interests, the question of independent labor political action has been the key question confronting the workers' movement. This world wide development of the 19th century was greeted with enthusiasm by Marx and Engels, especially in England and America, as opening the door to rising class consciousness and socialism. Certainly in Canada independent labor political action rapidly became pivotal to socialists in their intervention in the labor movement.

The organizations created in this period, in Canada and throughout the world, proved unable to stand up to the acid tests of proletarian internationalism and loyalty to the class struggle during World War I and after. Faced with the betrayals and inadequacies of these leaderships and organizations the most politically advanced workers throughout the world identified with the call of Lenin for the Third International. The twenty-one points of the Third International drew a

chasm between the Communist and Social Democratic leaderships and organizations of the working class.

However, partially due to problems of leadership and partially due to the immaturity of the political class consciousness of the working masses, revolutionary communists failed to establish and consolidate their relationship with these masses in many countries. It was to the problems created by this chasm, not between the Communists and the Social Democrats but between the Communists and workers, that Lenin turned his attention in his still instructive *Left Wing Communism, An Infantile Disorder*. Never one to adopt a posture of "Workers of the world, give me a call," Lenin urged strenuous activity to regain the ear of the masses who had not broken from their reformist leaderships. In certain situations, he even urged a united front with these organizations so that the Communists could go through this experience with their class.

This problem of isolation was intensified in the worldwide depression of the 30's because of the degeneration of Stalinism. This found its most abominable expression in the period of the rise of Hitler when the Communist Party was enthusiastic about the prospects of "after Hitler, us" and treated the social democrats and especially left social democrats as social fascists, more dangerous than the fascists themselves.

It was the Social Democratic parties and not the Communist parties which went through the most ferment as a result of the biggest defeat of the workers movement in history. It was they who began to question most earnestly and urgently the reformist policies of their leadership. In the face of the possibilities opened up by this ferment, Trotsky proposed a "turn" on the part of French comrades, to overcome their isolation from the class, and to go through an experience in which they could increase their influence and win a part of the class away from reformism. This became a model known as the "French turn". In the US too J.P. Cannon realized that, as he put it, the mountain would not come to Mohammed, and he helped turn the small forces of American Trotskyism into the Socialist Party. They later emerged with sufficient force to play a greater role in the American class struggle. Such was the isolation of revolutionary socialists from the class, that they realised that

not even a united front with the main class organizations was a possibility. To appeal for Unity you must have something to offer. They had to adopt tactics of entry.

The upsurges following the Second World War did not solve the problem. Revolutionists were still unable to gain even a toehold in the class despite repeated betrayals by the leaderships, of the workers' aspirations and even their actions. This was a crisis for the Trotskyist movement. Since the workers had not by-passed their established leaderships, even in struggles as great as these, how were revolutionists to gain influence? Two strategies were adopted – the strategy of entry *sui generis* ("of a special kind" leading up to Pablo's 1950s European-based drive towards broad liquidation –ed.), followed by the European sections, and (*versus an alternative we pioneered -- Web Ed.*) the strategy of fraction work with a non-split perspective carried out by the Canadian Trotskyists. We did not give up the perspective of winning the workers to the building of a revolutionary Leninist party. We did not substitute for this a policy of pushing along and winning the leadership of the traditional organizations. But we realised that the hold of these organizations on the class was real and reflected the lack of experience of Canadian workers with class struggle politics.

The essentials of these problems face all revolutionists today. They persist despite the wave of the youth radicalization.

This is the key problem facing revolutionists today – how to gather the forces for the future mass revolutionary party, and how to extend the influence of their revolutionary program for the class struggle in face of the fact that the overwhelming majority of workers in advanced capitalist countries like Canada have as yet to break in the most elementary way from the hegemony of pure capitalist politics or to break from the reformist parties in the workers movement. Is there a shortcut to this process by not working in the traditional organizations of the class? This approach sounds like the political equivalent to the remedy Lenin used to talk of – the special powder that would kill a fly, as soon as it was put on the

fly's wings. The problem however – is how to catch the fly.

This presentation is about this problem. How can revolutionary socialists in Canada win hegemony for their revolutionary views and organization in face of the fact that the NDP has the undisputed following of the advanced workers of Canada. Does an orientation to the NDP mean abandonment of revolutionary for reformist politics, or does it involve a transitional strategy oriented to winning leadership of the class through struggles that take place in the mainstream organizations of the class? Can the latter be done? For those interested in more than holding lecture classes for workers – does an orientation to the NDP develop or prohibit a positive relationship with rank and file workers in extra-parliamentary action? Can this relationship be established? What formulations, tactics and perspectives will best help us in that process?

The authors of this work agree with the formulation in the 1970 document of the League for Socialist Action (LSA) *The Socialist Vanguard and the NDP*, which says the "NDP is the touchstone of class politics. All working class politics revolve around it and an incorrect position on it is fatal."

In the course of years of experience in the CCF (*the farmer-labor Cooperative Commonwealth Federation founded in 1933 and superseded by the labor party, the New Democratic Party in 1961*), and a decade in the NDP, Canadian Trotskyists developed a number of guiding formulations to direct their work. These are: "Unconditional and Critical Support of the NDP," "Fraction Work with a Non-split Perspective," and working with left formations in the struggle to "Win the NDP to Socialism." These formulations are a valuable heritage and are an essential part of the foundation for our work in the NDP.

UNCONDITIONAL AND CRITICAL SUPPORT

This is a dialectical construct of our relationship to the NDP in this whole period of the revolutionary process in Canada. The NDP is an expression -- of independent labor politics, an expression of the elementary advancing consciousness of the workers.

Because of this, and in the absence of any other (*mass –ed.*) vehicle (*other than the degenerated and atrophied Stalinist CPC –ed.*) which gives political expression to this class consciousness, as revolutionists we support the NDP. We attach no conditions to its leadership or program in return for our support. Because we do not barter over the conditions of our support, we assume full rights to criticize both the leadership and the program of the NDP.

It is essential to be aware of the dual character of the NDP. On the one hand its primary significance lies in the fact that it is a labor party, and thus we support it. On the other hand its leadership and program do not meet the needs of its class character,

Many radicals reject this view of the NDP and argue that it is simply a bourgeois party. In this they might think they are in honorable company. Speaking to the second congress of the Communist International, Lenin argued against a delegate from Britain; "Comrade MacLean was guilty of a slight inaccuracy with which it is impossible to agree. He calls the Labour Party the political organization of the trade union movement.... Of course, for the most part, the Labour Party consists of workers, but it does not logically follow from this that every workers' party which consists of workers is at the same time a 'political workers' party,' that depends upon who leads it, upon the contents of its activities and of its political tactics. Only the latter determines whether it is really a political proletarian party. From this point of view, which is the only correct point of view, the Labour Party is not a political workers' party but a thoroughly bourgeois party, because, although it consists of workers, it is lead by reactionaries..." (I)

In this sharp and exact sense, the same sense that led Lenin to refer to the Soviet Union as a bourgeois state, in the course of discussing its dual nature (10), it is of course not incorrect to define the NDP as a bourgeois party.

The question is whether, as an all-encompassing definition, this designation locates the NDP among the configurations of class relations – or whether it is

a useful category that turns into a categorical imperative. If our analysis of the NDP is to be rigorous, we must appreciate its dual character. We must direct ourselves to the social and historical circumstances in which the NDP is situated. We must reject the search for any "all encompassing" term – any formalistic explanation. Dialectical materialists seek their exactitude in the concrete.

This question of labels is an important one and has been discussed many times in the Trotskyist movement. Peter Miller, a British comrade, wrote in defence of his concept of the "dual nature" of the British Labour Party: "The attachment of labels (bourgeois, reactionary, etc.) to the Labour Party tended to serve as a substitute for a real analysis. Of course, internally we can say what we like about the Labour Party, we can say it is a bourgeois party – but unless we say precisely in what sense it is bourgeois, the most disastrous political consequences will ensue." (22)

Although designating the NDP a bourgeois party is 'neat' and captures our historic opposition to its inadequacies as a class struggle vehicle, use of this label can deny its contradictions relative to both society as a whole and to the internal dynamics of the party itself. It risks missing the essence and judging the party by purely subjective criteria – by the criteria of the wishes and thoughts of the NDP leadership.

It is important to place the NDP and its petty bourgeois leadership in a context of contradictory development. In discussing the rise of consciousness, Plekhanov (*a giant of Russian Marxism, educator of the pre-WW I generation who however opposed the Bolsheviks in 1917 – ed.*) pointed out that the potential and dynamics of ideas are "explained not by the situation of the given class, taken in isolation, but by all the particular features of the relation between this class and its antagonist or antagonists. With the appearance of classes, contradiction becomes not only a motive force, but also a formative principle." (7)

The inability to understand contradiction leads to one-sided and false formulations and conclusions. The NDP must be examined not only in terms of the central contradiction between capital and labor, but also relative to the conjunctural relations between and in these two classes – at any given time – in all their complexity.

What we are concerned with as intervening revolutionists is not only the NDP's final location but its present motion and dynamic.

The predominant feature of the NDP is that it poses independent labor political action to the working masses of Canada at this time. That it takes on this critical role underscores a longstanding problem of revolutionists in the Anglo-American world, facing as they do the relatively underdeveloped consciousness of their working classes. This is a reality that cannot be ignored or wished away – we are still taking the first steps.

NOT A NEW PROBLEM

The founders of Marxism confronted this problem many times and insisted on the absolute necessity of independent labor political action. Engels wrote: "The first step which must be taken in any country newly entering into the movement is to organize the workers into an independent political party, no matter how, providing it is a genuine workers' party." (5)

On numerous occasions Marx and Engels directed their anger at sectarian socialists who did not see the centrality of this first gigantic step. Marx was enthusiastic over the electoral support given to Henry George by the New York workers in the 1880's, despite the manifest idiocy of George's views from Marx's viewpoint. He did not judge this development in terms of the bourgeois or petty bourgeois politics of George but rather in terms of the movement of the class.

Underscoring the importance of class political consciousness, Engels wrote in December of 1886: "A million or two of working men's votes next November for a bona fide working man's party is worth infinitely more at present than a hundred thousand votes for a doctrinaire perfect platform." (10)

Similarly, Marx greeted the first, preliminary, efforts of the British workers to organize independently on the political field, even though this was narrowly expressed by candidates who stood for the defence of only certain sections of the working class at that time –

garment workers' candidates and coal workers' candidates, etc.

Lenin argued for the admission of the British Labour Party to the congresses of the Second International (*the then still revolutionary 2nd International of the Lenin cadre –ed.*) "because it represents the first step on the part of the really proletarian organizations of Britain towards a conscious class policy and toward a **socialist** workers' party."

He attacked those who opposed seating the British Labour Party for taking a sectarian position and for ". . . turning Marxism into a 'dogma', whereas it should be a 'guide to action'. When there exist objective conditions which retard the growth of the political consciousness and class independence of the proletarian masses, one must be able patiently and steadfastly to work hand in hand with them, making no concessions in principles but not refraining from activity right in the **midst** of the proletarian masses. These lessons of Engels have been corroborated by the subsequent development of events, when the British trade unions, insular, aristocratic, **philistine** selfish, and hostile to socialism, which have produced a number of outright traitors to the working class, who have sold themselves to the bourgeoisie for ministerial posts.... have nevertheless begun **moving towards** socialism, awkwardly, inconsistently, in zigzag fashion, but still moving towards socialism." (3)

Trotsky continued this tradition in his discussion of three types of development of workers' political action. The question took on new dimensions with the degeneration of the Communist Parties. In Great Britain, the U.S. and the (*British Commonwealth*) Dominions, he found the situation markedly different from the European countries. In Britain, it was the unions, after considerable experience and in the face of their nation state's declining economic fortunes, that turned to the formation of the Labour Party. This generalized their needs for political action organized against the bourgeoisie.

NDP A DETOUR ?

It is interesting to note that all these thinkers, discussing many different types of this development, never refer

to any of them as a "detour." In this they hew to the Marxist rejection of subjective characterizations in critical analysis. To them the class struggle has no map whose schema places labor parties off some predestined road of history. Revolutionists who use this term to describe the NDP are revealing schematic formalism and subjectivism both symptomatic of a sectarian methodology.

Lenin was fond of saying "The revolution is not like the Nevsky Prospekt" (not like Main Street). In his discussion of contradiction Plekhanov wrote "the path along which it forces mankind to move is not at all a straight line.... But, in mechanics too, cases are known when what is lost in distance is gained in speed.... Contradiction appears where and only where there is movement, and where there is movement thought goes forward, even though by roundabout ways." (8)

It is in this context that the labor party represents a giant step forward from simple trade unionism. Measured in terms of the totality of Canadian society, the NDP represents that step – the development of independent labor political action. The critical measurement of this development (or process) cannot be based on the ideas of its leadership nor can it be based on its numbers. Only a minority of the trade unions are affiliated to the NDP and it receives only a minority share of the working class vote. At this time, it is the expression of only the more advanced workers and their allies. Yet because of its attachments to union locals, and through its riding associations, the NDP is structured so that much of the emerging consciousness and its energies are focused in on it. The NDP's significance as a labor party is found in the way it projects independent labor politics. It is a giant step forward relative to voting for either the Liberals or the Tories – or abstention from politics. As Trotsky argued in the case of Britain; "The Labour Party, in its upper ranks, is politically very close to the Liberals, but it is incapable of restoring to English parliamentarism its former stability; for the party itself, in its present form, is merely a provisional stage in the revolutionary development of the working class. MacDonald's (*the BLP's*) leadership is not more secure than Lloyd George's." (13)

To see a picture that underscores the importance of the NDP one has but to look south of the border (*to the USA*). There we see the youth radicalization still flirting with the bourgeois

parties. We see this radicalization shorn of its perspective by having little or no sense of the working class as the motive force of social change. And we see a working class with no means of political expression – for all the liberal bourgeois and social democratic currents which abound in the U.S.

POLITICAL ACTION IS NOT A NEW IDEA

The Canadian labor movement has been conscious of the need to have its own political arm for some time. The need to break from the simple trade unionism practised in the United States was being voiced as far back as 1903. In the December 5th *Toronto Star* of that year, the weekly trade union report makes interesting reading:

"The trade union weapons, the strike and the boycott, will be powerless against the forces which are now operating to undo all that the unions have accomplished.

"While the American union leaders, it is charged, are fretting away their time and energy in the pursuit of non-essentials, belittling adverse rulings, and affecting to believe that the pendulum will soon swing to the other side, the British see the issue more clearly, and they have concluded the courts are destined to give them more rather than less trouble.

"The British workingman, knowing the courts will continue to be used to his discomfiture, has determined – and it is as natural as that night should follow day, that he should so conclude – that he must wield some more formidable weapon; therefore he has made up his mind to go into politics and influence the legislature."

This was a report of a speech given to a meeting called to nominate a Board of Control slate of a class character against the bourgeois candidates, even though the latter had labor endorsement. The article ends up; "Mr. Prescott concludes that what is happening in England today is but a forecast of what will be happening here tomorrow."

Mr. Prescott's tomorrow is now here. The Canadian working class has followed the British example, but some radicals can't recognize a labor party when they see one.

(Ed. note: SOME "WAFFLE" ERRORS: *Waffle: a large left-nationalist tendency which developed rapidly inside the NDP in late 1969, gaining substantial support and directly challenging the leadership before being expelled three years later –ed.*)

There is an assertion, common around some Waffle circles, that the NDP is an objectively imperialist party – the leftwing and third party of U.S. Imperialism. This charge does not stem from any criticism of the fact that the NDP lacks a class struggle approach to international politics. Rather, the argument hinges on the structural relation of the NDP to the international trade union movement. This argument has a wide appeal on the left because of the disgusting record of the U.S. trade union brass on issues ranging from race to foreign policy. It is glaringly apparent that these bureaucrats, who dominate the internationals, are integrated allies of American imperialism.

This fallacy about the NDP is untenable however. The domination by the brass which characterizes the international **union** movement is **not carried over** into domination of political action in Canada. This is a fact.

Where the US bureaucrats' political concepts hold sway in some of the more conservative Canadian union locals, they do not support the NDP. Leading supporters of the NDP are independent Canadian unions like CBRT (*the then Canadian rail industrial union, now merged –ed.*) and CUPE (*the largest public service union*). The affiliation of international unions to the NDP takes place at the level of the local unions and shops. Where the organization as a whole took a position (*as*) in Steel (*USWA, the international United Steelworkers of America*), the action was taken in defiance of the U.S. brass. Support of the NDP is one of the more important breaks from the pattern of U.S. unionism.

As well as misreading the NDP's structural relationship to the trade union apparatus, many Wafflers give undue weight to this question as a criterion for categorizing the NDP. Its status as a labor party is much more profound than can be determined from its endorsement by what is only a minority of the Canadian trade union movement.

Integration does take place at the level of the Canadian union and NDP leaderships, but more decisive since affiliation takes place on the local level, in moving in the direction of the NDP, the union leadership

is responding to the consciousness of the more advanced workers. The false emphasis given to the question of structural integration also tends to dismiss the riding associations. The majority of these also voted against the Waffle at Orillia. We must make the point that, in blaming their defeat on the Unions, the Waffle leadership fell heir to some distasteful anti-union prejudices of the old CCF.

The usual corollary to the mistaken position we have been discussing, is the thesis that the rise of national unionism will destroy the NDP – that it will throw the labor rank and file into bitter conflict with the NDP under Waffle tutelage.

In fact, it may well be CBRT and CUPE, two active NDP supporters who lead the exit in favor of a Canadian trade union center. The B.C. Federation of Labor, another strong NDP supporter, has also called for complete autonomy. It is ridiculous to assume (*federal NDP leader*) Lewis and Co.'s blind support of the Internationals in the face of all these pressures. The NDP brass needs the support of the unions and, if they sniff a powerful sentiment, we can be sure that they will remain either neutral or support the Nationals. Of such stuff is opportunism made – so, also is superficial and primitive analysis exposed.

For revolutionists it would be foolhardy to identify a break with the Internationals, even though an expression of the radicalization, as a principled break from reformism. A Canadian trade union center is not *ipso facto* a revolutionary trade union center. Some wishful Wafflers make this false elision. Such a profound shift requires much more. The events that would lie at the roots of such a crisis of leadership in the class are not yet upon us – nor do they loom in the near future. If the coal strike in Britain did not serve to significantly weaken the allegiance of the workers to Labourism (*the BLP leaders failing to support them –ed.*) one can hardly expect more from the less sophisticated working class of Canada.

IS THE NDP A SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY?

We must examine the usefulness of designating the NDP a Social Democratic party. This is crucial to any evaluation of its ideological significance. The NDP's primary

character does not derive from its social democratic features. In fact, not even a significant layer of the leadership is social democratic in the classical sense of repudiating certain key Marxist beliefs while attempting to remain in a Marxian tradition. Their ideology is too primitive for Kautsky or Bernstein (*two giants of German Marxism before WW I, who nevertheless supported that war and opposed the Bolsheviks in 1917 –ed.*). They (*the NDP leadership*) have never even dealt with, let alone repudiated, Marx. Saintly socialists like Salem Bland and J.S. Woodsworth have been enough for them. Their reformism is liberal and opportunist rather than hardened and social democratic.

Those who designate the NDP as Social Democratic usually have a profound overestimation of the consciousness of the class. They usually argue that the NDP is tolerated by the bourgeoisie due to its supposed function of disseminating reformism to the workers. The facts are contrary.

It is inaccurate to see the NDP, or its leadership, as prime purveyors of reformism. The proletariat is sufficiently weak and the bourgeoisie sufficiently strong that no conveyor belt is required. It is disseminated directly through their educational system and mass media without any reliance on social democratic translators or priests. It is in precisely this context, of the relative backwardness of the class, that the NDP represents a step forward.

Reflecting the illusions as well as the aspirations of advancing workers, the NDP has not yet betrayed the consciousness of the class it represents. In fact, it has not yet even confronted it in any hard or sustained way on any issue. The NDP, after all, was not born as the result of a showdown or parting of the ways in the working class movement – it was not a backward step. It was born out of the weakness of the trade unions in facing the Canadian state, and the inability of the declining and more farmer oriented CCF to defend them – even though they had endorsed it.

It is only recently that the Ontario NDP leadership has begun to try to define itself with any consciousness at all. With the fall '73 ten part series on Liberty and Equality they hoped to define the NDP relative to both "liberal capitalism" and "the undemocratic left." The attendance, averaging 35 per session tends to discount

the value of ascribing a social democratic essence to the NDP and its membership.

Des Morton, an initiator of the course, saw the **lack** of any strongly entrenched social democratic ideology as one of the big problems. He described the Waffle as reflecting a deep seated crisis rooted in the rapid membership growth of the '60s. This growth, he maintained, had eroded the Fabian and social democratic heritage of the CCF and had allowed the Waffle to run wild in what he called "an intellectual fridge."

Only a small minority of the NDP leadership has even a CCF background. This "social democratic" course, based on the ideas of John Stuart Mill's "On Liberty," is the best this leadership could offer after ten years of pragmatism, in an attempt to entrench itself as priests of historic social democracy. Their most earnest try at taking on the cloak of social democracy turned out to be a peek-a-boo revelation of naked liberal reformism.

WHAT KIND OF ORIENTATION ?

(PART TWO)

Once we have decided that in essence the NDP is a labor party we must decide our orientation to it. The first step is to decide if our orientation is strategic or only calls for tactical adaptations.

A strategic orientation involves a number of questions. If the NDP is a labor party then logically it will be the arena in which many of the contests for the leadership of the class will take place. If the central contradiction in the party is between its working class base and the petty bourgeois leadership and program, it would be folly for revolutionists to abstain from the long term struggle to affect the synthesis of that contradiction. These views demand a strategic orientation which flows from the realization of objective processes. This is geared to the resolution of the major crisis of our epoch – the crisis of leadership.

Though revolutionists may win strong influence in limited sectoral battles in community, student, local union, and many other situations, the political struggle for the leadership of the class takes place in the NDP – this establishes the framework, not the boundaries, of the battle.

This does not imply a struggle for the leadership of the NDP. It is a struggle for the leadership of the class – to win it away from the program, leadership, and organizational method of the NDP. In all these things, revolutionary Marxists know the bankruptcy of a simple labor party formation. The sectoral battles train precious cadres. The contest for the political leadership of the class alone builds the mass revolutionary party. Our orientation

must place us in a proper strategic relationship to our necessities.

Involved is an understanding of where we are at. Building a revolutionary vanguard party is not a matter of declaration but of dialectics. We do not as yet possess a viable leadership relationship to the masses. We are a cadre gathering propaganda group. Our forces are still too small to credibly address the masses directly in our own name – except in rare cases. We seek out these opportunities, but we seek them realistically. We avoid substitutionism. We speak to the advanced workers through our support of, and our participation in, the NDP. That is to say, a strategic orientation defines both the arena and the role we are able to play at this conjuncture.

A tactical approach is the opposite of this and flows out of a different orientation – a different evaluation of both the possibilities and the necessities. All political groups (left and right) in Canada must have some tactical approach to the NDP,

Intervention in the class struggle requires frequent tactical approaches to many organizations where there is ferment. Examples would be working with Catholic organizations in the grape boycott, and the United Church on the issues of Chile and South Africa. These are generally short range single (and specific) issue encounters.

Though there may be many superficial similarities in practice flowing from the two concepts, to reduce an orientation to the NDP to a tactical one is to place it on the level of a special events concept. This denies the weight and significance of the NDP and falsely lumps it as just another sectoral area. The centrality of the NDP is denied by depicting our relationship to it in the paltry limits of the normal Leninist use of the word tactic.

This notion is based on a misreading of the possibilities open to revolutionists. Tactical support is like deciding to take the TTC (*Toronto transit*) when one has no other transport. So a tactic is adopted of taking a bus whenever one happens along – jumping on and off to avoid paying the fare. It leads to a credibility gap between us and the advanced workers and mis-educates our cadres as to the realities and the value of the class vehicle.

WHAT DOES "UNCONDITIONAL" MEAN?

Recognizing that a correct orientation to the NDP poses the question of strategy, we must decide whether our support has any conditions on it for the strategic period. The term "unconditional support" grates badly on a lot of peoples' ears because they tend to equate it with undying faith or unconditional surrender, or some similar notion. We agree with Gus Horowitz, a leader of the U.S. Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party, who uses the term to describe his party's relationship to the nationalist movement of the oppressed. He defines it as meaning that the SWP will support them regardless of their leaderships or program.

"Revolutionary socialists give unconditional support to the national liberation struggle of the Palestinian peoples against Israel and imperialism; that is, support regardless of agreement or disagreement with the political line being put forward by the leadership of the movement at the given time." (23)

This definition is appropriate to our strategic orientation. In fact, no other position is tenable for mass oriented revolutionary politics in Canada today. What would "conditional" support be? What if conditions are or are not met? This would be a position of dependency – skipping through the hoop of the NDP to the crack of the whip of the parliamentary caucus. Contrary to any idea of genuflecting before the altar of Social Democracy, unconditional support is the only position of independence. It is the only position independent of the leadership. This is not support for what the NDP **does** at any given instance, it is support for what it **is** in this whole period.

THE TROTSKYIST TRANSITIONAL PROGRAM

The transitional program is a series of democratic and transitional, struggle-focusing and consciousness raising, demands. The application of this program is inconceivable except in the real processes of the class struggle. These demands take on their historic role only in fusion with the political and economic struggles of the class itself – in its battles, through its organs. This does

not deny building the revolutionary vanguard party – it makes it possible.

It is impossible to implement the transitional program in Canada today without unconditional support to the NDP. The transitional program is not merely a set of demands, not merely a tool kit; it is the struggle for leadership of the class. Those who do not orient correctly to the NDP cannot participate in that process,

This is revealed most sharply by those who have a position of unconditional opposition to the NDP. We can see the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) (*Maoist --Ed.*) circulating its petitions endorsing socialist revolution on the streets. We have seen the Canadian Party of Labor (*again, Maoist --Ed.*) reduce itself to an economist sect which apes habits drawn from their false middle class stereotype of what the workers are. We have watched SUPA (Student Union for Peace Action), and class collaborationist "Community Organizers" doing their war dances around the gut issues of garbage collection and playgrounds.

Trotsky saw the interconnection between the labor party and the transitional program, even "a very opportunistic labor party." In a discussion about the labor party question In the United States he said; "That our young comrades separate the transitional program from the labor party is understandable because the transitional program is an international question, but for the United States they are connected – both questions – and I believe that some of our comrades accept the transitional program without good understanding of its meaning, for otherwise the formal separation of it would lose for them all importance." (11)

Attempts to bypass the consciousness of the class lead to either capitulation to its backwardness, or utter frustration. These pressures operate on those who have only a position of critical support. It leads to a persistent challenge of the NDP itself, a challenge which the vanguard is not in a position to fulfill. Otherwise we would not be in the NDP in the first place. This posture is satisfactorily heroic but politically incredible. 'We are reminded of an anecdote – (question) What is the definition of a hero? (answer) A flea taking a Kung Fu stance in front of an elephant!

Such challenges tend to depoliticize the contestation. An example of this was the first (and last) newsletter of

the now defunct left caucus of the Ontario NDP published in 1973 (*reflecting the new LSA leadership's revised orientation –ed.*) This was written in the framework of a tactic of critical support. Critical support led the newsletter to spend all its space attacking and analyzing the leadership rather than explaining democratic and transitional demands. This turned the brunt of their attack onto the NDP itself rather than separating the rank and file from the brass on real issues. This tactic subordinated the real political differences which should be focused, and forced the question of an organizational alternative into false prominence.

Another symptom of the insidious sectarian disease that thrives on the tactic of critical support, is the compulsion to always raise one's fundamental criticism of the NDP with the gay abandon of someone throwing pearls before swine. One of many examples is the September 24/73 issue of **Labor Challenge**. In a centerspread explaining why editor George Addison was expelled from the NDP, Dick F. 'trots' out fundamental criticism to center stage.

He states that the NDP has "no" program for the class Struggle – not an inadequate program mind you! There is no passionate defence of the right of socialists to affect this program. In fact the article practically brags that the differences under discussion are only hints of the big reasons to oppose the NDP as a whole. Dick F. had abandoned the method of the Transitional program and our orientation for a tactic of critical support in response to the pressure to show that the LSA was as left as the RMG (*Revolutionary Marxist Group, an ultraleft Trotskyist tendency gaining influence in the LSA at this time –ed.*) As Engels once put it: "What childish innocence it is to present one's own impatience as a theoretically convincing argument." (20)

Such positions miss the real polarizations that will produce militants receptive to revolutionary politics. For the bourgeoisie the NDP represents class politics. For the working class as a whole the NDP represents class politics. If revolutionary socialists don't know what the NDP represents they end up criticizing the bourgeoisie for false consciousness – as *Labor Challenge* did in last year's Manitoba election coverage. It put itself in the position of saying that the bourgeois organizations were needlessly hysterical and basically incorrect. It found some local small town businessman to quote because he saw the NDP as "no threat". Misreading the real class struggle, and

posing no practical alternatives, this kind of critical support poses abstentionism to any conscious worker.

False opposition to the NDP also paralyzes sectoral work. Failing encouragement to the women's or the student's movements to orient to the NDP, what way is there to popularize the concept of class politics? We are left with abstract and spontaneist concepts of mass actions – exactly where and how is left to ingenuity.

WHAT KIND OF CRITICISM?

For revolutionary socialists, criticism of the inadequacies of the NDP is axiomatic; it is part of the struggle to build the revolutionary party. But it is important to define the nature and the mode of that criticism to control its effect. In many instances the stance of support and of criticism are organically tied together. Lenin makes this clear in his polemic with the ultra-lefts.

"And the mistake the 'Left' Communists are making is particularly dangerous at the present time precisely because certain revolutionaries are not displaying a sufficiently thoughtful, attentive, intelligent and calculating attitude.... (and unless they do, we stand the risk of being mere talkers) we must, firstly, help Henderson or Snowden to beat Lloyd George and Churchill (or to be more correct: to compel the former (*the British Labour Party leaders –ed.*) to beat the latter, because the former are afraid of their victory!); secondly, we must help the majority of the working class to convince themselves by their own experience that we are right...."(2)

The same realities that bring us to a position of unconditional support guide us in the effectiveness of our criticism.

Once we assimilate the reasons for this position we realize that it does disservice to our tasks to raise apocalyptic criticism to the level of the primary purpose of the intervention. For criticism to take effect the critic must establish credibility. Non-sectarian revolutionists do this by the struggle for concrete democratic and transitional demands.

Our criticism has to recognize the relations between the leadership and the rank and file. It is important to know that (*federal NDP leader*) Lewis is not just a reformist and that simple designation is not enough to predict all his actions. There

are also left reformists. Lewis is a thoroughly opportunist reformist who is guided by what the electorate wants or will buy. Without falling prey to opportunism ourselves, it is incumbent on us to do our work with the same and better awareness than he has – criticism must be relevant within the framework of that insight. No Menshevik theory of stages is involved, we are certainly not waiting for all the workers to support the NDP before we criticize it. We must however insist that consciousness develops as a process and we must direct our propaganda **to** it, and not simply **at** it.

There are pedagogical questions involved in the nature of criticism which are lost to sectarians. Their blindness to these questions is often among the first symptoms of their political disease. Revolutionists who would truly enter the class struggle must examine and learn the dynamics of criticism as a method of propaganda.

In relation to the concrete and felt needs of the class, its potency is in direct proportion to how it is presented in a framework of concrete and practical alternatives that the class can grasp as practical. In this the struggle for transitional and democratic demands presents many opportunities for critical analysis as the obstacles pose themselves in the experiences of the struggle itself.

The consciousness raising power of criticism in this framework is great. The positive and constructive nature of criticism directed to the accomplishment of understandable goals makes it extremely effective.

Criticism can also be a useful first step in unifying the already disenchanted and disaffected by spelling out their opposition to the status quo – but it is not a mobilizer, as many factionalists have discovered when they have finally won the freedom to go about the serious job of building their own organizations. Only concrete alternatives, viable and practical alternatives can accomplish this task. This is not the place for a full examination of this important subject, but before leaving it we must note that criticism has a different scope in the realm of theory than in day-to-day politics. In theoretical polemic criticism of ideas by the logical extension of their inherent contradictions has more usefulness because of the size and sophistication of the milieu in which the discussion takes place. One of the earmarks of a

sectarian is their inability to understand their audiences' level of understanding.

Coming out of the youth radicalization many comrades have come to revolutionary politics from petty bourgeois academia. Unlike the cadres of a proletarian group that is organically part of the class, they suffer from a debilitating tendency to Testamentary politics. They have a petty bourgeois attraction to the power of revelation – this is both self-justifying and self-defeating. One elision that is common to their thinking goes like this: To lead is to foresee. To lead is to forewarn as militantly as possible. (For surely the clever shall inherit the earth.)

* * *

The debate here has been involved but it is not a simple quibble over terms or nuances of meaning. Certain formulations come together to spell out their own logical connection. The NDP as a bourgeois party, a tactical orientation, critical support – these link up to spell out sectarianism. Labor party, unconditional support, strategic orientation, are also tied together – they spell out effective revolutionary intervention.

LONG-RANGE FRACTION WORK

As we noted earlier Canadian Trotskyists have developed certain formulations and slogans that summarize and focus their intervention in the Labor party. We shall now return to an examination of these. First we will consider "Long range fraction work with a non-split perspective" (*into both the CCF and the NDP - Web Ed.*) This construct is the result of many lessons and experiences.

In the late 40's and early 50's the world Trotskyist movement turned to the existent mass workers parties, both Communist and Social Democratic, with the view of making what was described as "entry *sui generis*" (of a special type). Our tiny forces, faced with (*the problem of*) atomic destruction and the growing conservatism of the masses, practiced liquidationism in many countries. Under the leadership of Michel Pablo many comrades did not see any alternative to deep entry and underground faction work – the pressure to adaptationism overwhelmed many.

Their concept (*of abandoning any independent public existence -- Ed.*) challenged the very need for the revolutionary party by denying the possibility of constructing it. We in Canada rejected this analysis and defeated their Tendency in our ranks.

We had just come through an earlier struggle against sectarian "purity" and subjectivism. We had come through a long and searching debate to establish the reality of our tasks and perspectives. We were a tiny propaganda group with a correct program and analysis and the aim of building a revolutionary party. This could not be done by simply proclaiming the party and waiting for the class to catch up. The sterility of this kind of idealism was obvious. We had to gather cadres to make that future party a possible reality. We had to go to the class at its own level in its own existing organizations. We had to make ourselves part of its experience.

These two struggles for clarity fused in our concept of long range fraction work with a non-split perspective. We rejected both the false concept of the independent party now and that of deep entry. We rejected both sectarian (optimistic) subjectivism, and liquidationist (pessimistic) subjectivism. As dialectical materialists and active revolutionists we turned to the task of building the cadres for our party in and around the CCF (*the farmer-labor based precursor to the NDP founded in 1935 --ed.*). To combat the pressures for adaptationism we kept a public face. We kept a headquarters and a book store though we had no public organization or press for several years. We started the slow process of recruiting to our program on an individual contact basis. We carried our transitional demands into the CCF and the unions. We trained our cadres in Trotskyism and the practice of democratic centralism to arm them for the building of the revolutionary party.

As a backhand compliment to the fact that we did not adapt or liquidate, in the early 1950's the Ontario CCF brass expelled fourteen of us. We raised our public profile a notch by forming the Socialist Educational League and commenced publication of the Workers Vanguard. Both were oriented to the CCF and presented as poles for socialist clarification and the consolidation of the left in the labor party. The CCF was still the focus of our politics even though it had shifted slightly as the center of our

activity. We were not **opting** for the sectarian course of confronting it as an opponent political party.

In the ensuing years our cadre gathering has been well served by our orientation. Without our public face we could not have met the tasks posed by the radicalization that developed outside the NDP. Without our deep involvement with the labor party we could not have recruited most of the comrades who lead the Trotskyist groups today. Many revolutionists tend to forget their own origins and personal political development. In losing this appreciation of their own development, their capacity for patient work in the real class struggle is weakened. The fact remains that the overwhelming majority of revolutionists in Canada come out of some experience with the NDP. It is sheer wishful thinking to expect that the mass of the workers will bypass this experience.

Our understanding of our tasks has meant that, at the same time as we maximize the advantages of our open face, we don't pose ourselves as enemies of the NDP. It serves no purpose to falsely pose the revolutionary party as an **actuality** for the present or the near future. We direct ourselves to the concrete tasks of the continuing struggle.

We say join the NDP and join with the revolutionary socialists in their participation in struggles both inside and outside the labor party. We have avoided posing ourselves as a political party, alien to the labor party, bent on a series of smash and grab operations. The hold of the NDP over the class and the possibilities of revolutionary work in the NDP are too long term to move to a premature collision which will see **us**, rather than the reformist leadership, as the losers. In this context, the **non-split** perspective defines the **long term** struggle we face to overcome our isolation from the class and to really become an alternative, a revolutionary challenge, to the petty bourgeois leadership of our class. It does not define the **amount** of work to be carried on in the NDP – this varies with the conjuncture. The NDP is the focus of our mass oriented politics, but not always the center of our activities. Nor does it mechanically rule out our participation in left groupings that have split from or been driven out of the labor party.

To sum up, the NDP is the arena in which we contest for the leadership of the class. But it is not always the arena for all the struggles of the class. Various facets of the class struggle, and specific currents in the general radicalization, are reflected in struggles that are not contained by the NDP. In this, our refusal to make a deep entry is vindicated by our freedom to present ourselves to all the foci of the class struggle and the radicalization.

At this stage in our development **all our work is fraction work.** Since we are not yet a party it is not yet our direction to emphasize our independence and enter all struggles under our own banners. The centrality of our NDP fraction work is underlined by our qualifying it with the phrase "non-split perspective". The formulation "long range fraction work with a non-split perspective," in other words, concretizes dialectically both our long term struggle for the leadership of the class through the NDP, and our intention to work independently with other elements that may come to the class struggle outside of its ranks. Even though such work may, for a whole period, center our activity outside the NDP, it is crucial that it does not build any artificial barriers between us and the focus of our politics.

Because we see the NDP as the main vehicle of rising class consciousness for the whole next period, with various components of the radicalization passing under its umbrella, we have a strategic orientation to the development of broad left wings in its ranks to challenge the liberal reformist and social democratic leadership. In these formations we put forward transitional and democratic demands which challenge the party to adopt a line to meet the needs of the class struggle and its mass base. We challenge the leadership to carry these real class struggle demands. Their unwillingness to do so sometimes means posing our own organizational alternative – but it is formalistic and sectarian to present ourselves in this way unless the political lessons justifying it have been assimilated.

THE EVOLUTION OF A TERM

To digress for a moment, we should note the term "our party" and the way it has evolved in its usage among Canadian

Trotskyists. In our struggle with the comrades who were against our orientation to the CCF in the late 40's, we had many arguments defining this term. We clarified it to mean that, because we had a correct program, we possessed the **nucleus** of the future revolutionary party. In as much as we were the only embodiment of that program at that time we were justified in calling ourselves the nucleus of the future party among ourselves and our immediate contacts. The designation "embryo" of the future revolutionary party was also discussed. In the fact that our group practiced democratic centralism and had our program it was argued that we were a tiny version of what the party would be. This was generally rejected because it implied that our small group would grow linearly and thus that everything was then present, including the basic personnel. We said, on the contrary, that the party would be built by a process of splits and fusions, regroupment and reunifications of major proportions.

Given the proliferation of left groups in Canada in the last decade, including the proliferation of Trotskyist groups, and now the establishment of a whole new centrist formation in Waffle, our understanding has proven to be prophetic. Yet many comrades of the LSA have slipped into the mystifying designation of their league as "The Party."

One is reminded of a primary school joke. (Question) What is the height of arrogance? (Answer) An ant climbing up an elephant's leg with intentions of rape. With their self delusions about their real place in the struggle to build the revolutionary party some comrades have placed themselves high up the elephant's leg indeed. They are only a tail's twitch away from having their illusions completely shattered.

WIN THE NDP TO SOCIALISM

For the vanguard elements in the NDP left we must put forward a slogan of struggle which will intensify their differences with the leadership without losing their base in the NDP. This is the essence of our transitional approach and the nexus of our definition of the vanguard. We do not see the vanguard defined simply by the ideas they have, as do some. We locate the vanguard by their role as actual leaders in the real class struggle. Otherwise one risks mistaking the **fringes** for the vanguard. These people must relate to where the class is **now** before they earn the designation vanguard. For this they need more than a

fundamentalist view of the NDP – they need a Trotskyist understanding of how to work.

For our tasks in the NDP the best general slogan yet worked out, by many and painstaking tests, is "Win the NDP to socialism." This abbreviates our general slogan "For a Class Struggle Program and a Socialist Perspective." For a variety of reasons the abbreviation is the most appropriate yet devised to tersely describe the necessities of our direction in the NDP.

The ONDP leadership has been engaged in polishing its repertoire of reformist terms in the *Ontario New Democrat*. "Win the NDP to Socialism" concretizes the opposite pole. For revolutionists it is the only slogan that begins to capture the size of our task. "Fight for Socialist Policies" leads to a mish-mash of disconnected fights over individual issues and policies. What if some of these are conceded? What if, as in the Saskatchewan convention, a great majority of them are adopted? Are our tasks then fulfilled? The art of revolutionary politics is not only to advance, but also to consolidate. Each gain must broaden the perspective of those who fought for it for this consolidation to take place.

Another popular alternative, "Win NDPers to Socialism", breaks with the transitional method in placing the onus on the personal and intellectual development of the membership instead of focusing the struggle for a correct program against the leadership. We might try "Win the NDP to the Transitional Program – Or as Much of it as Possible", but this hardly expresses the enthusiasm necessary to the task. None of these other formulations come to grips with the real problems.

Are we "lying to the masses" when we put forward this slogan of struggle which is practically impossible to realize? Remember, it is not **totally** excluded that the rank and file of the unions and the party can break through together and, if our cadres are prepared and large enough, some major conjunctural struggle could transform the NDP and wipe out the majority of its organization in favor of the mass revolutionary party. But this is not what sustains the correctness of the slogan. If we adopted the methodology of those who think this is lying it would have an interesting effect on our student work where, in the context of a

'red university' strategy, we call for a women's liberation university, for student-staff control. It would have curious effects on our policy of running in bourgeois elections on a platform of key democratic and transitional demands. This argument demonstrates a logic devoid of the dialectic.

The kind of dogmatic and formalistic thinking that this expresses leads away from any understanding of both social classes and history. The quickest way to expose it is by posing the kind of questions it either cannot answer, or answers wrongly. Those who think that the slogan in question is a lie should tell us – is it the same kind of lie to say win the NDP to socialism as it would be to say win the Liberals to socialism? We must ask these thinkers, do you see that the NDP is a labor party while the Liberals are a bourgeois party? Does our slogan have to address itself to the workers in the NDP who are struggling with the problems of the kind of program and leadership that they need? Do you recognize that they will learn the inadequacies of the NDP only by their own experience and not by unrequested school lessons?

And more – do you accept the concept that a left wing should present itself in a defensive and popular way? Is there any difference between slogans and demands? How about between slogans and fundamental precepts? What is the difference between propaganda and agitation? The debate on these questions could be interesting and voluminous. But we agree with Trotsky about sectarians when he said, "Bolshevik Leninists, without waste of time, calmly leave these groups to their own fate". (12) With our slogan of "Win the NDP to Socialism" we are not telling militants anything except the direction they must move in and the focus of the struggle,

Nor is this slogan counterposed to building the revolutionary groups except in the minds of reductionists who are only happy when uttering ultimate truths. We are not engaged in strip mining off the cream of the NDP left to leave the party barren. Our recruiting should not contradict the building of left caucuses – our strategy does not demand that we have hegemony over them at all times. We are working in a mine of contradictions which provides revolutionists with rich opportunities to test their politics and leadership in the mass arena. This is a responsibility as well as an exercise! We are very much accountable!

"Win the NDP to Socialism" is an attempt to formulate the overall -strategic Imperatives of the class. It is not the sole determinant of every conjunctural intervention. There were times in the Waffle's development that the posing of the Leninist vanguard organization was the only correct thing to do. The LSA's dogmatic application of "Win the NDP to Socialism" at that conjuncture was routinist and abstracted from the real political problems that Wafflers were working out. There are many sides to sectarian mistakes. What image did we project to them by insisting that they remain in the NDP while **we** had a public face? Sheer arrogance! Without posing ourselves as a viable alternative, we were in effect arguing that they had no right to any perspective but to preserve a deep entry!

This formal and simplistic application of the slogan at the Hamilton conference spawned much of the unease about it today. Formalism breeds mistakes. History does not repeat itself but mistakes definitely tend to. In this case tragedy helps prepare the groundwork for disaster. The LSA, who posed as "unconditional supporters" and came through as uncritical, with no party profile at all, have now made a 180 degree overcompensation into confrontationism.

LABOR GOVERNMENTS AND METHODOLOGY (PART THREE)

The experience in many advanced capitalist countries indicates that their working classes stand to go through profound and intensive experiences with social democratic and labor governments in office. This triggers a dynamic process whereby, as Trotsky put it, "any reasonable, serious reforms by the Labour Government in the domain of taxation, nationalization, and true democratization of the administration would cause an immense outburst of enthusiasm on the part of the working masses, and since appetite increases with eating, successful moderate reforms would inevitably serve as a stimulus for more radical reforms." (15)

The process of the class breaking from reformist and parliamentary illusions is given impetus by this very appetite. Indeed this process will frequently accelerate while these governments are in power. To intervene and

affect this process tests all of our analytical and political skills.

Where such parties represent independent labor political action we call for their election as an inherent part of our unconditional support for this principle. As Lenin pointed out in his polemic with the British ultra-lefts, the election of labor parties is the best means of providing the working class with the richest possible experience that tests their reformist illusions and their leaderships. A year of the NDP in power is worth a thousand forums on the limits of Swedish "Socialism". It is an experience that can bring forward the class as a whole. A review of the gains of working people under the NDP government in Manitoba, estimated by the *Toronto Daily Star* as to be worth \$500 each a year, is sure to have an effect on the political consciousness and aspirations of Ontario workers.

Our task in this process is twofold. We must deepen the understanding of the class significance of an NDP victory, while exposing the limitations of the reformist leadership. To arm ourselves for this task we must come to grips with some basic questions. Foremost among these is the class character of the government. Is it a labor government or a bourgeois government? Some may think at times it is best described as some form of popular front phenomenon.

A number of interacting factors must be considered in this analysis. First is the distinction which Marxists have always made between the state and the government. This is worth dealing with at some length in order to avoid confusion.

Leninists have always polemicized against any illusion that a parliamentary victory could ever be the road to, or equivalent to, state power. Trotsky posed it succinctly; "The opportunist is always on his knees before the idol of the bourgeois state and consents to advance to his ideal only through the asses' gates constructed for him by the bourgeoisie. And these gates are so made that no one can get through them." (14) The difference between parliament and the state is at the heart of the differences between reformists and revolutionary socialists.

We know that the state as a whole remains in the control of the bourgeoisie despite the electoral victory of a labor

party. We might characterize an NDP government as a captive of the bourgeois state, thus forced to take public responsibility for that state in as much as it does not struggle against it. The record of reformist governments shows that some laws might be changed but the judiciary remains. The civil service remains essentially intact, as does the wide repressive apparatus. This is not altered by the added amount of the economy brought under 'public control,' as this is not done by socialization under workers' control, but by nationalization. The essential reins of power remain outside the legislature. There is not much room for argument about this within the Marxist movement.

Moreover, this division between government and state has widened as a corollary of the extension of bourgeois democracy and universal suffrage (see Mandel's pamphlet on the state) (6). The history of the 20th century is the history of the growing autonomy of the state apparatus from parliament. This is especially so in Canada where the smoke screen of Federal-provincial constitutional bargaining has obscured what is virtually the entire transference of economic policy to a state apparatus which is almost directly integrated with the top echelon personnel of the bourgeoisie.

Normally relations between state and government are harmonious. In fact at the cabinet level Ministers and Deputy Ministers are frequently interchanged. Elected cabinet ministers and civil service deputies fill each other's shoes quite nicely. But when the harmony is disrupted it is clear that it is not parliament that rules the state. As the war between top civil servants and Diefenbaker demonstrated, even brother servants of capital have limited leashes as long as their power is restricted to parliament.

The subservience of parliament to the state, and its lack of real power, is an essential part of the Communist strategy of smashing the bourgeois state. But this cannot be extrapolated in a mechanical way. For instance, we know that a fascist state is only a particular form of bourgeois state. But in its particularity lies a whole different set of political problems than those that confront us in dealing with bourgeois democracy. The loss of working class rights under fascism demonstrates that bourgeois democracy is more than solely an ideological rampart for the bourgeois state.

Parliamentary government is also a concession to the workers. It serves to mystify bourgeois rule, but it also contains its antithesis in that it encourages the democratic and egalitarian aspirations of the masses. Parliament is both a facade and a

forum, a rampart of bourgeois rule and a laboratory to test the illusions of the masses. Given the political consciousness of the Canadian working class, parliament is still the arena for major political struggles that will play their part in unifying and raising our class for its emancipation.

Workers will learn by their own experience that their political struggles must transcend parliament. But when they enter political struggle, through what they believe to be their own party, we must solidarize with them. The key determinant in this period is the fact that they have entered independent political struggle. To quote Lenin; "What do we mean when we say that the struggle of the working class is a political struggle? We mean that the workers cannot wage the struggle for their emancipation without striving to influence the affairs of state, to influence the administration of the state, the passing of laws." (4)

Even for the bourgeoisie it matters who is in government. The two party system is not just a public relations fraud. There are conflicts between the needs of the different strata of the bourgeoisie and these must be ameliorated and mediated. One avenue to the decision making apparatuses of the bourgeois state is through the government. While there is no difference for the workers which capitalist party wins an election, different sections of the capitalist class have their favorites.

There are good reasons why labor parties, for all the time-honoured reformism of their leaderships, are never the favorites of the bourgeoisie. An NDP victory takes an important tentacle of the state apparatus out of their direct control. They understand the important distinction between reforms instituted by their own parties and those of a labor party – no matter how inadequate they **both** may be. Says Trotsky; "The half truths of the Conservatives have the quality of Machiavellianism; the half truths of the Labour Party are the child of contemptible cowardice. The representation of the bourgeoisie resembles the tiger which hides its claws and cuddles amiably. The Labour leaders of the Thomas type are more like the beaten dog with his tail between his legs." (16)

The bourgeoisie understand that something profound happens with the election of labor parties. "We shall no longer be dealing with the old fight between the Liberals and the Conservatives, the differences between them remaining in the 'family' of the possessing classes."(ibid.) (17) They do not like to see things go out of the hands of the family where other forces can influence the calling of the shot.

The labor leaders may be 'beaten dogs' but they are accountable to the workers even while they are trapped in the parliamentary net of the state.

It is crucial that we too realize that something important happens with the election of a labor majority in parliament. It is an important consistency with our established call for the election of the labor party to describe such a government as a labor government, to support it, and to call for it to struggle against the state. From such a position we can join in and affect the experience of the class as the inadequacies of the parliamentary road are laid bare in the real political struggles. As we fight in the party and the mass movements for the implementation of the demands of the masses, whose aspirations are heightened by their conquest of parliament, we can quicken their understanding of the state as the fundamental instrument of bourgeois rule. As this political class understanding develops and deepens our program for the construction of the revolutionary party and the overthrow of that state becomes real and moves to center stage in the consciousness of the class.

The designation labor government rather than bourgeois government is both useful and logical. Where is the evidence of qualitative change that would suppose that an election of a labor party would transform it into a bourgeois government? How does the election of the labor party, **which we called for**, turn it into an instrument (rather than a victim) of bourgeois rule, one day after the workers have elected it? This is like saying that a trade union becomes transformed as an institution the moment a strike is over and it signs a contract; because it has agreed to adhere to and participate in the administration of that contract.

The state is not a 'thing' in itself – apart from class and institutional relations. It is a series of related repressive, rationalizing and mystifying institutions. The complex and changing configurations of these relations, in bourgeois democracy, provide a large part of the environment in which the consciousness of the working class grows. Parliament is one of these institutions and, as the Chilean experience (*the military coup d'état against Allende – ed.*) dramatically reveals, it is both vulnerable to the repressive arm of the state and in potential conflict with the purposes which it was supposed to serve as an instrument of bourgeois rule.

To designate an NDP government as bourgeois misconstruits the social and political contradictions that are actually involved. It misleads both

ourselves and our periphery as to the political tasks of the conjuncture.

With the victory of a labor party the social contradiction is no longer between the ruling class as represented by the state/government versus the workers. It changes to be the workers and their elected representatives versus the state – a much more naked and politically sophisticating experience. The rising differences between the workers and their leaders, between the 'government' and the workers, becomes an internal political struggle in the workers' movement – this is a most promising situation for a vanguard group with its roots in the class.

A DIFFERENCE IN METHOD

We must stress another major feature of the debate on the nature of labor party governments – this is the difference between dialectical and historical materialism, and reductionist mechanical materialism. The proponents of the view that an elected NDP forms a bourgeois government are correct on their grounds – the grounds of formal categorical logic. The question is whether they are correct within the framework of Marxism. Is their analysis based on a dialectical appreciation of the real empirical data? Marx once described Proudhon thus: "....as a philosopher with a magic formula in his pocket he imagines himself spared the necessity of going into.... details..." This and other limitations to Proudhon's horizons led Marx to say: "He aspires to be the synthesis and he is in fact nothing but a composite error. "(6) Plekhanov too had many occasions to combat dogmatic formalism. He noted that: "It was Hegel who said that any philosophy may be reduced to **empty formalism**, if one confines oneself to the simple repetition of its fundamental principles." (9)

Marxists, while rejecting simple empiricism and pragmatism, always attempt to apply their dialectical understanding to the concrete. As Lenin put it in *Left Wing Communism*: "The task is to apply the general and main principles of Communism to the peculiar relations between classes and parties, to the peculiar features in the objective development towards communism that are observed in every country and which should be studied, found and solved."

It is in this spirit that we refuse to call nationalism, capitalism, or labor parties intrinsically reactionary without situating them socially and historically – without measuring their essences by the criteria of the actual class struggle. By the standards of a 'grand scheme' of history,

by an examination in the teleological framework of mechanical determinism, it is 'true' to say that all of these phenomena are bourgeois and/or reactionary. But Marxists reject any concept that this abstract 'truth' shall make you free.

We know that truth is concrete and must be constantly realized in the praxis – the coming together of theory and action. Categories are hard won and important tools in the arsenal of our method, but they are only a part of that method. Formal, simplistic, application of categories in conjunctural analysis transmutes doctrine into dogma. The political results are sectarian isolation and/or opportunistic and adventurist attempts to break out and get back into effect in the real world.

In politics we need to capture not only the apocalyptic essence of political phenomena, but also the internal contradictions and the direction of their synthesis. Ours can not be the method of rigid formalism. The method of "Yea, Yea, Nay, Nay, for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil", as Engels described it. (18)

That is why it is not enough to examine any one facet of a phenomenon before we define it. While our historical understanding is decisive in the final analysis, it is metaphysical to see it as the only factor in conjunctural analysis. Our doctrine is part of a method, not a road map. Our categories, the codification of our experience, are an aid to understanding the conjuncture – they are not an explanation of it. The topography of politics is much too fluid for road maps.

To the dialectical materialist there is no eclecticism involved in recognizing the reactionary character of nationalist ideology and at the same time placing no programmatic demands on nationalist movements of the oppressed as an *a priori* condition for our support.

Nor do we raise the consciousness of the class to the position of reigning determinant – we reject the U.S. Democratic Party and the Parti Québécois despite the workers' identification with these parties. Nor is structural identification with the institutions of the working class decisive – in a prerevolutionary situation the apocalyptic 'objective' and conjunctural roles of a labor party tend to fuse and make it a bourgeois and reactionary force. Our method is concerned with dynamics – not statics. As Ernest Mandel put it: "The Marxist method is moreover inconceivable except as an **integration** of dialectical rationalism with empirical

(and practical) grasping of the facts.’’ (21)

The characterization of the NDP as a bourgeois party, or on NDP government as bourgeois, is correct however on an important level. It bespeaks our experience with such formations; that they will not adopt consistently anti-capitalist demands and revolutionary measures. Their perspective forces them to join, content or agonized, in some accommodation with the bourgeois state. It is important that this knowledge forearms us for participation in the struggle.

But this characterization fails to capture the processes involved and is thus inadequate and politically sterile. It fails to capture the party's and government's relations to the masses and their organizations, the significant legislative concessions, the attitudes and actions of the bourgeoisie, and the tension between the government and the state. It fails to capture and express the contradictory essence that is most germane to the political struggles of the conjuncture.

THE QUESTION OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Since the consciousness of the class plays a significant role in our analysis it must be analyzed also. Is the growing identification of the masses with the NDP a result of false consciousness or developing class consciousness? There are several measures to be used in answering this question.

One such is the NDP's legislative record. Legislative concessions, even when they do not transcend capitalism, are of no inconsiderable importance to the working class. We are not in the New Left habit of dismissing reforms as petty and 'animal' in their appeal to the 'commodity placated' working class. These concessions are important to the working class, its standard of living and its capacity to struggle, and they are extracted from the bourgeoisie against their inherent class interests. Any increase in the cost of the commodity labor exacerbates the crisis of the profit system.

The New Left developed from Gramsci a concept of a hegemonic ruling class that conspired against the workers by granting them huge concessions in order to more pleasantly exploit them. It is not in the scope of this work to

make a detailed study of the fallacies of this naive reduction of the complexities of class, social, economic, and political relations. It is sufficient to say that these people confuse the resilience of capitalism with the will of the bourgeoisie.

At this conjuncture, while capitalism still has the flexibility to concede some reforms to the working class, these reforms can and are being legislated by NDP governments. The workers' identification with the NDP is deepened by their recognition of this reality.

Another indicator of the fact that this rising identification with the NDP is not false consciousness is the social character of their government. This is defined by the access it grants to decision making by the opposing class. The access of the bourgeoisie to the bourgeois parties is both immediate and ultimate. It ranges from campaign contributions, to lobbies, to integration of the so-called "conflicts of interest." Labor governments are not so generous to their individual constituencies and treat their opponents with undue fair play, but their concessions to the bourgeoisie are not built into their very existence and party apparatus. Their softness in the class struggle comes from their program – not their social base.

The bourgeoisie do not support their fund raising campaign dinners, nor do they sit on party policy committees. They relate to the labor party only across the bargaining table in the time honoured manner of trade union bargaining. Whatever spinelessness the NDP shows in its negotiating flows from its program – not from social necessity .The consciousness that the class possesses about the different character of such a government is a step forward in that it represents labor political action independent of the bourgeoisie and its parties.

Even the bourgeois press coverage can be examined for the role in which it casts the NDP for its mass readership. The NDP government is constantly portrayed as a reluctant or compliant tool of the unions, the NDP party, or the pressure groups of the masses. In this the bourgeois press is more able to see reality than left sectarians.

Before leaving this question something should be said about our view that class consciousness will grow through and out of this NDP experience. In our knowledge of the fundamental (and ultimate) inability to carry the class

struggle to its historically necessary conclusion that is inherent in reformism, we know that our class will be faced with betrayal by social democracy. The time comes when labor parties betray not only the objective and long term interests of the workers, but their political consciousness itself. We must work in the knowledge that, when this threshold is crossed, we must have built a viable alternative around our program. If we have built well, and promulgated our understanding correctly, such betrayals will become victories in the consciousness raising process.

But that will be at a different conjuncture and the concrete political reality will be quite different from that of the present.

Simplistically defining NDP governments as bourgeois violates a number of principles of dialectics. It puts undue weight on the leadership's wishes to the detriment of understanding the party's dynamics and class base. It is based on a static analysis of the government's relation to the state and thus the economy as a whole. It gives no expression to the important differences of this government in relation to the developing mass movements. It stresses its capitulation to capitalism and obscures the concessions it gains for the workers. All of these one-sided judgments are a formalistic extrapolation of the historic knowledge of the vanguard rather than an objective evaluation of the conjuncture.

WHAT FLOWS FROM THESE ANALYSES ?

The definition of the class character of an NDP government is intimately related to the manner in which we would apply and present our transitional demands. If it were bourgeois (*if the NDP in power constitutes a bourgeois government, as some sectarians pedantically repeat –ed.*) we would frame our demands in the same way as we do for any other bourgeois government. We would aim to mobilize the masses against the government to expose the fundamental antagonisms between that government (and the state it serves) and the masses. Our propaganda would minimize any reforms won from such a government and stress the extra-parliamentary pressures that motivated them. We would be stressing that such reforms are consistent with capitalism rather than pointing to them as initial victories of the class in political action. We would advocate the complete

independence of the institutions of the class from the government, and these positions would make our 'support' to the NDP as a party inexplicable. *Labor Challenge*, over the whole last period (*up to mid-1973 --Ed.*), provides us with excellent examples of how this would be done.

If, on the other hand, an elected NDP forms a labor government, the product of a labor victory, the framework would be quite different. We would salute the reforms of their first initiatives and call on them to transcend these and deepen their legislative attacks on the miserable and exploitative profit system. We would call on them to extend medicare to dental care, to go beyond nationalized auto insurance to the whole insurance business, to nationalize not only the 'natural' monopolies but also the manufacturing that is based on them.

Our posture would be defensive. We would join in the struggle for the right of the party to control the government. We would call for the implementation of the party program by the parliamentary caucus and fight to establish that it was the party that won the mandate from the electorate, and not just the caucus. We would work to fuse the other individual struggles in the mass movement as a whole with the labor party and thus deepen the confrontation with the leadership. We would make capitalism the focus of our attack, show how it limits and sabotages the reforms of the NDP government, and explain to the party and the masses what must be done to solve this problem. We would do this by a series of transitional and democratic demands that would deepen the antagonism between the NDP and the state.

This does not mean accepting the bourgeois state apparatus and attempting to work through it. It is a strategy of exposing the class nature of that state by intensifying the conflicts between it and the labor government. It enlists the ranks of the party in the struggle against capitalism and the capitulationism of their own leadership without demanding, **as a precondition**, that they break from that leadership or their government at this juncture.

This strategy is not new. Trotskyists have practiced it in and around many NDP conventions, both provincial and federal. We have practiced it in and around provincial and federal elections. It is the strategy of unconditional

and critical support. When the NDP has been elected this comes even more into its own, particularly in the subsequent elections when that government is seen as most accountable to the working masses.

A MINORITY FORCE IN PARLIAMENT

On the federal level, the most likely experience of the NDP in the foreseeable future will be that of a minority force in parliament. With the NDP's parliamentary leadership on display before the whole class, we have enormous possibilities for propaganda and NDP directed agitation. We will have the chance to demonstrate the role of the NDP as the only defender of the masses' interests in parliament. It is the Liberals and Tories who are responsible for serving the exploiters. Every week gives us the opportunity to show, in a simple way, the manner in which class realities are reflected in parliament.

Within this context, we can definitely pose how, on key questions, the NDP fails to rise to the challenge. This does not mean criticising them for every error they make. It should be remembered in this regard that Lewis (*NDP leader in Ottawa*) is a sharp parliamentarian. Furthermore he packs two pistols. One for short range opportunist work and another for his longer range reformist objectives. By placing all the stress on his reformism we would mis-educate the real vanguard about the potential of the NDP leadership to move left under popular pressure, and thus we might aid in disarming them.

Our biggest gains will be scored when the NDP betrays the consciousness of at least a significant minority of the class. These will not be scored by lying about the NDP record as have *Labor Challenge* and the *Old Mole* (*ultraleft journal*) in the case of the NDP and the rail strike (they charge the NDP with parliamentary strikebreaking).

(See comments on the LC coverage in "The Subversion of the revolutionary socialist orientation to the NDP," 1974 pp.42-47, on this website -- Ed.)

Nor will it be done with a scalpel, niggling away at every little nuance and shortcoming. The biggest faults are best exposed with an axe, and for that one must sometimes wait.

To fail in this understanding is a capitulation to the cynicism of backward elements of the radicalization. It mis-educates the vanguard on the relation of the NDP to the

class (as opportunist as well as reformist) and makes one the village idiot of the NDP constituency.

Labor Challenge treated the tactics of the last federal NDP caucus as coalitionism and class collaborationism. Due to a debate in the Fourth International on the phenomenon of popular frontism, there has been a growing tendency among some Trotskyists to stress the similarities and obscure the important differences between a popular front and a reformist labor party. A false identity is extrapolated from the fact that both political forms practice class conciliationism. The important difference that is obscured is that popular fronts are structured organizationally and politically to accommodate and collaborate with the bourgeoisie – labor parties are structured organizationally and politically to struggle independent of, and against, the bourgeoisie. That their reformist, conciliationist leadership and program may lead to ultimate accommodation and collaboration, does not justify their immediate identity. To identify them blurs all distinctions necessary to clarify the path of intervention.

It is ironic that comrades who are promulgating this false identity of the NDP and the popular front cannot make a better reading of the bulletins of their co-thinkers in the world Trotskyist movement. Let us turn to the U.S. comrades' bulletin "United Front vs. Popular Front". On page four we find: "Healy's defence of the 'classical' form of the united front against 'revisionist' corruption is a prime expression of the tendency of infantile leftism to use the cover of 'Marxist nomenclature' to cloak a policy of abstention from the real struggle. Or, as Lenin put it: 'The surest way of discrediting and damaging a new political (and not only political) idea is to reduce it to absurdity on the plea of defending it.' This is precisely what Healy does to the idea of the united front." And this is precisely what LSAers are doing to our not so new NDP orientation by measuring it on their Procrustean bed of the popular front.

In this campaign against the NDP caucus' alleged coalitionism no attention has been paid to explaining how this is proven to be clearly coalitionism and not simply tactics based on a conciliationist adaptation to their limited grasp of the potentials. "The beaten dogs" are not very courageous after all.

RAMPANT REDUCTIONISM

Language and thinking are so interconnected that we can recognize weakness in the practice of one by inadequacies in the practice of the other. It has become too common practice to use the words conciliationism, coalitionism, and collaborationism as if they were interchangeable.

Comrades skip from one to the other with little sense of any change in essential meaning. By this kind of simplistic reductionism Websters becomes an irrational jungle and communication is seriously crippled. Inability to verbalize the reflections of reality in their complexity indicates limitations on our ability to reflect on reality.

A key distinguishing feature of a popular front, pointed up by one draft political resolution to the recent world congress of the Fourth International, is their declared purpose of including bourgeois parties (or their shadowy surrogates) in the front. Some comrades blissfully conclude from this that popular frontism is categorized by its program. After this first simplistic and false reduction how easy it is to skip on to the next! Since we know that the NDP program is conciliationist, and leads toward class collaboration, the parliamentary maneuvers of the NDP caucus are transmuted into coalitionism.

What next comrades? What happens to the call for the election of the NDP? Formalism and reductionism have brought us into a quandary. Surely we shall have to tidy things up and stop "....supporting **an electoral platform to advance class collaborationism**. A question of principle is involved," (the political resolution cited).

But maybe we don't have to give up supporting the NDP completely. Perhaps we just have to make sure we don't call for workers to vote for them if they stand any chance of getting in or becoming the balance of power. The conclusion from this kind of nonsensical analysis can be summed up by paraphrasing a disreputable old adage – "All power corrupts, and **the illusion of power** corrupts absolutely!"

We cannot move on without affirming a few facts. These comrades not only misread the theory of the popular front, but *Labor Challenge* misconstrues the NDP's 'balance of power'. On every major class issue the NDP has been powerless. The Tories and Liberals voted together on the rail strike and the corporate tax issue without the slightest concern about the NDP's so-called power.

TOWARDS A LEFT WING

The possibilities for the construction of a broad left wing in the NDP vary according to the tempo of the class struggle, the unevenness of the radicalization, and the possibilities outside of the NDP. The deep-going "Waffle" left (*the large left-nationalist group in the NDP –ed.*) was built at a far more favorable conjuncture than the one we face now.

At the present, despite the exit of the "Waffle" and the inability of any sustained nation-wide left to emerge, it remains true that the NDP leadership is not able to satisfy a consistent and significant minority of the membership. And, just as struggles continue to come to and be reflected in the NDP, the prospects for a left remain ever alive. The ferment in the B.C. NDP is an indication of this.

The problem is to maintain the perspective of a broad left without succumbing to despair, of either ultra-left or reformist varieties, or issuing silly ultimatums to the leadership or membership. An educational rather than a confrontational approach is called for. Failure to grasp this led *Labor Challenge* to headlines like "NDP Delegates Must Fight for Socialist Policies". This placed the onus on the membership and was coupled with strident attacks on the leadership which projected a totally unrealistic perspective for the immediate future. There continues to be openings for a broad left, but one of Shakespeare's characters might give us a good guide: "I can call the Gods from the deep seas," said the fool. "So can I, and so can any man" was the reply. "But will they come?"

The task within left wings is to win them to basic democratic and transitional demands as an alternative to the program of the leadership. That is our strategic orientation as defined by the non-split perspective and the task of winning the ranks of the NDP from the leadership on a programmatic basis. It should be remembered that at this time most people outgrow rather than reject the NDP and its leadership's reformism. They come to the left because it offers more action and a better program.

The problem of independent left groups of some significance, but outside the NDP, has been with us since the youth radicalization. Our efforts to polemicize with the New Left on the importance of an NDP orientation were cut short by the "Waffle" whirlwind which scattered our chances without its ranks assimilating our perspective.

Looking back it was not an illogical proposition that Trotskyists accompany such a group on its way out of the NDP without ourselves abandoning our orientation. Such a tactic was not excluded. In the case of the "Waffle" this would not have been 'tailism'. It was a case of staying with the radicalization and not excommunicating ourselves for lessons they had not yet learned. It would not have been condoning their error, but rather understanding the real problems they faced, and being able to provide them with our discipline and vision for the long struggle ahead.

IN CONCLUSION

We will close with a few words on the call for "NDP to Power." On this question of a governmental slogan we agree with Pierre Frank (*Fourth International leader –ed.*) who, in his 1967 introduction to the Transitional Program, wrote: "A program without the perspective of a government of the working masses to carry out anti-capitalist measures, is not a transitional program." Furthermore, that slogan should be a "...transitional governmental formula corresponding to the organizational conditions and consciousness of the masses at a given moment, and not.... a synonym for the dictatorship of the proletariat."

Archimedes once proclaimed that, given a lever, a fulcrum, and a place to stand, he would move the world. Trotsky referred to the Leninist party as the lever of history. While that lever is only as yet a program and a concept promulgated by a handful of Trotskyists, there can be no greater crime than abandoning our transitional method of politics. This kills our only hope of obtaining our lever and finding our place to stand. Thirty-two years of application of this method to the Canadian class struggle are summed up in the NDP orientation as developed in the 1970 LSA document (24) and explained here.

This is how to build a group into a revolutionary party — in the full sense, the meaningful sense, of that word. This is the duty and the challenge in the struggle to build the Fourth International — in the full sense, the meaningful sense of that concept. We must all pledge ourselves to both tasks. Without the first, the second is an abstraction.

Toronto, June 15, 1974.

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May 31, 1976

Letter to the Editor
Canadian Dimension

John Warnock's article in your March issue, Imperialism and the Canadian Left, is a very welcome contribution. Our appetite is now well whetted for the follow-up which he promises will outline the program of an anti-imperialist struggle, and presumably the forces that will rally in its course and establish a socialist Canada.

While it may well have been frustrating it was certainly not un-useful to have developed his arguments around the Moore-Wells book Imperialism and the National Question in Canada. As one who is thanked by the authors in the frontispiece "for time, interest and constructive criticism" I should say that the essence of my advice to Moore was that he should completely re-think the whole matter - along the lines of certain articles by myself that I loaned him which expressed substantially the same points so well developed by Warnock. It is necessary to clear away a whole accumulation of debris so that we can get to the essence of the problem and commence building a useful structure.

Warnock's aim is to aid the left to overcome its present disintegration - to resolve the national question. Thus he stands on solid ground in protesting Moore-Wells' lumping together all the various groups in the radicalization, without distinction, as "left nationalists," and resorting to what he correctly calls slander, when they state that underlying their opposition's position is national chauvinism. There is no question that such actions constitute a barrier to the clarification of the real differences and make the needed unity extremely difficult.

By the same token it would seem necessary to protest Warnock's own cavalier characterization of the Trotskyite organizations as anti-nationalist. It is also necessary to protest his tendency to equate small organizations with sectarianism.

Warnock notes the existence of five organizations that call themselves Trotskyist. But strangely he does not show that he has the slightest inkling as to why a fragmentation of what was once united in a common movement has taken place. Suffice it to say that one of the key issues in this process was the national question in Canada, with the majority leadership of the League for Socialist Action-(LSA) suddenly, in 1972, reversing field and adopting a position that is substantially the view expressed in the Moore-Wells pamphlet. One of the five, the Socialist League and its monthly publication Forward, is in substantial agreement with Warnock's critique of this pamphlet.

Marx, who Warnock would appear to clear of any taint of sectarianism never belonged to anything but small and impoverished organizations. While it is a fact that there can be no socialist Canada until the Canadian workers organize a mass party that has that aim and has the support of the decisive majority of the working class, Warnock seems to evaluate organizations primarily from the point of view of their size. In reference to the Communist Party of Canada he says that "Its strength among the Canadian working class in the 1940's is now finally recognized." However it was then already following the party line from Moscow and, certainly with the adoption of "collective security", a euphemism for "peaceful coexistence", and Popular Frontism, firmly in the camp of what Warnock says can only be described as socialidemocracy.

Smallness and sectarianism are by no means the same thing--the one can result from the objective situation beyond the control of the socialists and their organization; the other is a disease that, if socialists do not inoculate themselves against, can destroy even a large organization. One could define sectarianism as a refusal to fight or to struggle for partial, that is reforms, and transitional demands, as a tendency to turn one's back on such mass reformist organizations as the NDP and the trade unions, and as a tendency of an organization that does not yet have hegemony over the left but acts as if its concept of itself is already a reality.

At one point in his contribution Warnock asks, what happened to the radicalization of the late 60s and early seventies? To be sure it developed largely in the youth and the campus milieu. But can it be dismissed as Warnock appears to do with a quote from Lenin that would characterize that radicalization as one of petit-bourgeois driven to frenzy, as a fad?

That radicalization presented the entire left with a tremendous opportunity---to link it up with the NDP and the forces of organized labor --to help raise the level of the whole, and to sustain it and carry it forward until such time as the main battalions of labor, under the crisis of capitalism, would commence to move out as they are now beginning today. To be sure important elements in this radicalization made some serious errors but the primary factor which has resulted in a considerable dissipation, was not the fault of the new radicals, but must more properly be placed at the door of the leadership of the NDP and the trade unions.

But no doubt Warnock will come to grips with this problem in his follow-up article.

fraternally

Ross Dowson

03-01-4

Warns Gov't against nationalism

By Paul Kane

The Senate, where the sober second thinking in the Canadian capitalist state apparatus is said to take place, has just come up with some thoughts on the question of Canada-US relations.

In a special 90 page report the Senate's foreign affairs committee urges the federal government to keep its cool in the face of both the many provocations by uninhibited US businessmen and statesmen, and the mounting pressure across the country that actions be taken in defence of Canadian sovereignty and against the continuing US corporate takeover of the economy.

"There should be a continual awareness" it warns the Canadian government "of the danger of an over-response to nationalist sentiment in decision-making." Without suggesting just when or where, Ottawa, notorious for its prostration before Washington, has tended to over-react, it urges it to "ensure that (talks between the two countries) are handled in as balanced and mature a fashion as possible."

The problem, according to the Senate, is one of communications — there is an information gap from the

Canadian side. According to the Senate's way of thinking this is because we don't spend enough money to put US statesmen and business heads into the picture — only ten cents per capita compared to a West European equivalent of 63 cents.

The Senators failed to recommend how much more money should be raised and where it should be spent to make US government and corporate heads aware of the Canadian fact. Perhaps it's because US marketing and investment circles, with all their specialists and computers, already know all they want to know about their biggest export and import market and the area of their greatest capital investment.

The recent hearings held by the US ten-man congressional sub committee on Inter American Relationships, specifically designed to hear about Canada's nationalism debate, were eloquent testimony. The first day saw only the committee's chairman in attendance — the second day's hearing was postponed because of the committee's unavailability. Among the special invitees at \$35 a day was University of

Windsor professor Alex Murray who presented charts to show a falling off of Canadian popular concern and who with a smile told the committee that "Our surveys show that the strongest Canadian nationalist is a single female, under 25, living in BC who votes NDP."

A tiny outburst took place when John Petty, a NY investment broker, formerly assistant secretary of the treasury for international affairs between 1966-72 said "Canada has 75% of the world's water and we're going to need it someday." But chairman Long soothed things over "It's an educational process. We've got to deal with those problems before they reach crisis proportions."

This should end all talk about abolition of the Senate, curb complaints about the cost and usefulness of sending 24 senators and MPs to Florida every year to talk things over with their US counterparts in the Canadian-US Inter-Parliamentary Association, and win solid support, while we all pull in our belts, for President of Treasury Chretien's new budgetary increase to the Senate.

Forward Forums

Is nationalism reactionary?

By Paul Kellogg

The recent contribution to the debate in the Canadian left on the phenomenon of the upsurge of nationalist sentiment in the Canadian working class, **Imperialism and the National Question in Canada** by Steve Moore and Debi Wells, has been the subject of three important

critiques appearing in Canadian socialist journals. These critiques provided the subject matter August 6, for the latest in the weekly Forward Forum series.

The speaker, Dale Ritch, past president of the student union at York University, refuted Moore and Wells' contention that Canada is (or is becoming) an independent imperialist power, agreeing in essence with the review of the book by Jack Warnock in a recent issue of **Canadian Dimension**. Warnock exposes the inadequacies of the book's investigation of the "facts" supporting the existence of a so-called Canadian "independent imperialism", and uses the very statistics with which Moore and Wells advance their thesis to prove that, on the contrary, the Canadian economy is so dominated by American capital, that it does not and cannot play an independent imperialist role.

The conclusion that Warnock draws – as does Ian Lumsden in his review which appeared in **Canadian Forum** – is that contrary to the contention of Moore and Wells, Canadian nationalism in this period, has a progressive dynamic, one that clearly exposes the class nature of Canadian society and poses socialism as the only possible solution, for the Canadian capitalists' subservience to the American imperialist rip-off of Canadian society – the root cause of Canadian nationalism.

As Ritch pointed out in his forum, concurring with Warnock, the significance of the Moore/Wells book in the debate on Canadian nationalism, lies not in any unique contribution it makes – in its arbitrary use of statistics and lack of any credible research, it is a very frustrating book to have to read – but in that it is one of the very few contributions from Canadian socialists who claim that Canada is an independent imperialist power.

In the month of July, the Forward Forums concentrated on the current crisis in the Third World. July 23, Gord Doctorow, organizer of the Socialist League, dealt with the current upsurge of struggles in South Africa. He made the case that the Black struggle to wrest basic democratic and human rights from the racist Vorster regime leads directly into the struggle for socialism, that indeed they could only be won when the apartheid regime is toppled and replaced with a society that abolishes the rule of capital, a society led by the working class.

The importance of South Africa is

that it is the one country in all of Black Africa where the black working class has significant social weight.

The week before, Robert Kasher, chairman of the United Left Coalition at York University doing graduate work in third world studies, led a discussion revolving around the problem of underdevelopment in the third world. A central aspect of the talk was the success workers' states such as China have had tackling this problem as compared to a country like India, still under the thumb of imperialist exploitation. However, with imperialist domination of the world economy, underdevelopment cannot be definitively eradicated until a world socialist revolution places all the resources of human productivity at the disposal of the oppressed peoples of the world.

The two preceding forums dealt with the question of the crisis of the world capitalist economy with an economic analysis by Murray Dowson on July 9, followed on July 16 by a forum entitled "Reform or Revolution" where speaker Ross Dowson dealt with the anti-working-class dangers and pitfalls of a reformist approach to the problems created by capitalism, putting forward a revolutionary socialist approach.

The three upcoming forums in the month of August carry on in the Forward tradition, presenting socialist analyses of issues and events of concern and educational value to socialists active in the struggle for socialism in Canada. August 13, a critique of detente and the current Stockholm peace petition being circulated by the Communist Party, taking up the utopian and illusory character of these projects of the CP, will be presented by Calvin Johansson, trade unionist and NDP activist.

The following week, August 20, Harry Paine, prominent activist in CARAL, long-time NDPer and socialist, asks the question "Should Leninists join the NDP?" affirming the views of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky on mass labor party formations such as the NDP.

Finally, August 27, the forum will be a tribute to the first anniversary of the defeat of American imperialism in Vietnam, a discussion of the dynamics of the Indochinese Revolution one year after, and a theoretical explanation of the accelerated tempo of socialist planning.

Oct. 14: acid test for the left

By Ross Dowson

The thousands of workers, students, and other victims of the wage freeze and cutbacks who joined the October 14 Day of Protest demonstrations in the major centres, were met with a shower of leaflets and papers from zealous partisans of various revolutionary groupings. While this cacophony of appeals testified to the increased number of Canadians who consider themselves to be revolutionists, it also revealed its badly splintered character and the ultra-left and/or sectarian stance that most of it took in relation to this historic turning point in labor's struggle for social justice.

While the partisans of groupings that have become more familiar were there, new ones appeared, along with some not seen for some time. Among the latter was the Socialist Labor Party, the remnant of the pioneer Marxist movement in America whose leaflet headline falsely counterposed "Protest Against Wage Controls or Abolish the Wage System?" Among the former were the Canadian Communist League (ML) and its press **Forge**, **In Struggle**, and leaflets put out by an alliance of groups in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver, reflecting the breaking up and realignments taking place in the Maoist

newspapers and leaflets of the slogan "For an Unlimited General Strike". Among the variations of this demand were the graphics with the headlines "Protest? General Strike? Revolution!" - on the leaflet of the Canadian Party of Labor.

The slogan "For an Unlimited General Strike" and its variation "For an Indefinite General Strike" was projected both as the way ahead, but also with the critical edge that the CLC Day of Protest, the 24 hour general strike, was tokenist, a useless gesture, irrelevant, and designed to let off steam, to dissipate a militancy alleged to have reached the stage of a social explosion.

Its partisans ignore the colossal efforts devoted to mobilizing the October 14 Day of Protest — the struggles on the shop floors to overcome hesitations, to overcome the confusion and resistance of many of the secondline leaders across the country to the CLC executive call to strike the factories and to organize mass actions in the streets. **Forward** erred in its last minute appraisal of the situation at strike deadline last issue by reporting that "all the postal services and essential transportation facilities" would be closed

down. The militants were not able to close them down even though armed with the authority of the CLC convention and its top leadership.

The advocates of the "Unlimited General Strike" slogan showed not the slightest awareness of the level of class consciousness and combativity of the working class in this country — neither of the objective situation that prevails, over which revolutionists have little or no influence, nor its subjective reflection in the minds and will of the class — which for the as yet quite small and isolated revolutionary groupings must also be considered as essentially part of the objective situation.

Most of the revolutionary left indulged in rhetoric and posturings of the fun-and-games politics that cropped up in areas of the student radicalization — the game of one-upmanship, of escalating demands and of framing non-negotiable demands — an infantile concept of vanguardism, of always having to be

up-front, even if it meant out of hearing and out of sight of any significant component of the radicalization — revolution for the hell of it.

This ultra-left tendency in the revolutionary left was sometimes reinforced by and combined with a narrow dogmatism and sectarianism — most consistently demonstrated in the pages of **Spartacist**, published by a group that issued out of the League for Socialist Action, then the Revolutionary Marxist Group, which calls itself the Trotskyist League. As the CLC leadership shifted from opposition to any form of popular protest, onto the organization of the most massive demonstrations yet seen in Canada, then to the first 24 hour general strike in North American history, the Trotskyist League increased its cries that the trade union brass were nothing more nor less than "the bourgeoisie's cops." It ridiculed the rallies as "impotent" and heaped scorn on the leadership's resignations from government boards as "simply a sop." It dismissed the projection of a one day strike as being designed merely to siphon off protest, blow-off steam, as demagogic, and unserious, and the October 14 Day of Protest itself, as the "final 'militant' fling to assuage the anger of combative unionists

into the September issue which was headlined "CLC Brass Angles for Pact with Trudeau."

In the midst of the preparations for the 24 hour general strike **Spartacist** devoted two full pages in their slim 16 page journal to an extensive quotation from a 1935 article by Leon Trotsky. It dealt with the general strike as an action to stop war. The relevancy of this particular article is by no means clear — and the section that they select for reproduction again in the following September issue, dealing with a general strike organized with permission of a capitalist government, is obviously completely irrelevant.

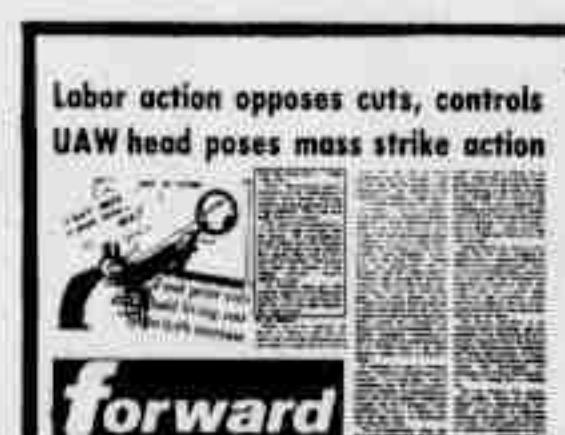
They appear to be totally ignorant



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of Trotsky's differentiation of a general strike which is a "demonstration", such as the Day of Protest, from one which is "an extraordinary upheaval of society and in any case calls for strength on the part of the revolutionary class. The general strike may only be applied when the working class and particularly its vanguard is ready to prosecute the struggle to the bitter end", he wrote in *Where is Britain Going* in 1925.

Trotsky did however have some highly relevant things to say about such elements as the Trotskyist League: "Sectarians who are capable of differentiating between but two colors: red and black. So as not to tempt themselves," he wrote "they simplify reality... At their base lies a refusal to struggle for partial and transitional demands, i.e., for the elementary interests and needs of the working masses, as they are today. Preparing for the revolution means to the sectarians the convincing of themselves of the superiority of socialism. They propose turning



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before the curtain is lowered on labor's active resistance to controls."

The June-July issue of their paper which covered the CLC convention that endorsed the concept of a general strike, found the Trotskyist League stuck with the headline — "CLC Blocks General Strike." Early-August saw the CLC executive set October 14 as the day. Without an August issue they remained saddled with that line on

For a congress of all Cdn labor to fight Trudeau's wage freeze
forward
Program for labor

November, 1975 Forward

movement, along with **Labor Press** of the Workers League, and the **Militant Worker**, both of which identify with Trotskyism.

The **Militant Worker**, whose partisans come out of a series of conflicts originating in the League for Socialist Action, through the Revolutionary Marxist Group and the International Socialists, has sadly degenerated to promoting the primitive positions of syndicalism.

Marking the majority of these groups as ultra-leftist was the prevalence in the headlines of their

→ p. 2

their backs to the "old" trade unions, i.e. to tens of millions of organized workers, as if the masses could somehow live outside the conditions of the actual class struggle! They remain indifferent to the inner struggle within reformist organizations — as if one could win the masses without intervening in their daily strife!" Trotsky called for no "compromise with them even for a single day."

The **Spartacist** developed its sectarian line on labor's struggle against the wage controls in a series of attacks against the Revolutionary Marxist Group as its press, **Old Mole**, attempted to face up to the realities of the Canadian class struggle. In its April issue, after noting that the CLC leadership had taken a turn, though contradictory and incomplete but on the whole positive, the RMG urged that "a correct approach needs to be established in light of the bureaucracy's turn and increased prestige. On the one hand, the kind of infantile and demagogic anti-bureaucratic sniping which is characteristic of many left groups is particularly dangerous at a time when the left has a precious opportunity to increase the credibility of socialist and class struggle perspectives in the labor movement." And so it urged constructive proposals. In another article it stated "the rhetorical 'calls' for a general strike now by some of the far left groups are not particularly useful."

Alas! this tendency did not last long — not even to the next (May) issue, by which time UAW leader McDermott and CUPE leader Hartman had come out for a one day general strike, with Hartman suggesting it be held on the date when Trudeau announced the controls (October 13). The editors of the **Mole** responded that "such a delay would be a disaster". They thereupon projected the necessity of "nothing short of an unlimited general strike."

The same issue carried an extensive unsigned article which outlined in detail the unlimited general strike in such a way as to show to the writer's mind it is only another word for the Canadian socialist revolution: a revolution which can come about merely through the implementation of a series of organizational moves codified by a tiny group of revolutionists.

The October and October 27 issues of the **Mole** revealed the internal conflict within the RMG between ultra leftists, and others who are seriously trying to come to grips with the realities of the Canadian radicalization. This is demonstrated in the statement in the September issue that it is "the verdict of October 14 that will determine how both sides proceed in the months ahead," and the previous concept that cries for general strike "are not particularly

useful", versus the now-recurring theme that it is necessary to mobilize behind the slogan "For an Unlimited General Strike", even while admitting that October 14 revealed there were "serious weaknesses in the labor movement and highlighted just how far it is from launching" such a struggle. Thus the ultra left prevailed.

In classic ultra-left workerism, **Workers Action**, published by the International Socialists who issue out of a current that developed in the Waffle, joined by some ex-RMGers, depicts the October 14 action as having "exploded" and having "erupted" completely outside of anything done by the CLC leadership. It presents the union brass, who everyone knows denounced the controls from day one, as not being out to bust controls, and, with October 14, having used up its "last weapon."

Its incapacity to arrive at an understanding of the contradictory character of the trade union leadership caught **Workers Action** July issue with a headline "CLC Meets Trudeau! Ditches General Strike". Its September issue called the action projected on October 14, one year after the imposition of controls, a "meaningless birthday celebration". With its October issue **Workers Action** joined in the hulabaloo for an indefinite general strike. Pandering to the tendency among some militants to attempt to by-pass the structures of the labor movement, in effect give up the difficult struggle to win them, during past months **Workers Action** has been calling for the mobilization of a "real movement against the government." Its projected indefinite general strike is also to take place outside of and in the face of the opposition of the present structures of the labor movement — through a nowhere-yet-visible "rank and file organization".

Most of the revolutionary left acted as if the labor party did not even exist. While the RMG talked of political solutions, it scarcely even mentioned the NDP or any serious political alternative. In the face of the vigorous attempts of the Saskatchewan and Manitoba Federations of Labor to force the NDP governments in those provinces into opposition to the controls, the **Mole** even counselled defeat by pontificating that "Once in government it (the NDP) has no choice but to attack us to shore up private profit which is the very basis of capitalism." That the NDP fully identified with the October 14 protests is ridiculed by the editors of **Workers Action** as nothing but an attempt to divert such actions "into the dead end street of ballot boxes and parliamentary juggling acts," as they pandered to backward prejudices with comments about "professional politicians."

Labor Press, published by the

Workers League, another partisan of the "Unlimited General Strike", projected the possibility of bringing down the Liberal government Now! Instead of seeing the anti-wage freeze actions as building up support for an election of an NDP government, it flamboyantly projected the smashing of the Liberal government and its substitution by an NDP government as an immediate objective for the working class.

It declared itself for the NDP to power — with the proviso that the NDP, which it denounced in the same article, along with the CLC, as being "tied hand and foot to the system and which will not mobilize the labor movement to get rid of the Liberals", must develop socialist policies. These policies include the nationalization of basic industry and the banks "without a penny of compensation," as if no compensation is a principle, and the "occupation of all plants threatened with layoffs and closures."

On the other hand, **Labor Challenge**, published by the League for Socialist Action, correctly posed the question of the NDP, supporting it, without laying down any conditions for that support. Aside from a shameful tailist position developed in an article by its editor in the June 21 issue, it restored to grace such concepts as "work to build the NDP", "fight for an NDP government and join us in the struggle to win the NDP to socialist policies." Two years ago the leadership of the LSA turned that organization into turmoil over these and other concepts which resulted among other things in the publication of **Forward**.

The revolutionary left should stop and make a serious study of its views and how they were developed and

becoming a substantial and ultimately the decisive force.

Instead of advancing the cause of Marxism or Trotskyism, October 14, when hundreds of thousands were prepared to give a sympathetic hearing, found them making mockery of the very ideas that they claim as their own. If they do not reverse their course the revolutionary socialists will not only dissipate their energies and frustrate the anticipations of their precious forces, but by their own ignorance and misdeeds be guilty of isolating themselves.



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applied in this turning point action in Canada history.

With the developing crisis confronting the capitalist class and their political parties, the working class are now undergoing a radicalization not seen since the end of World War II. Then, history found the revolutionary socialists with too few forces to get a real hearing. Today the situation is qualitatively more favorable — particularly from the point of view of the numbers and the resources of those who consider themselves to be revolutionary socialists. For the first time they have a real opportunity to break out of isolation and move forward in an effective way towards

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QUEBEC AND THE CANADA CRISIS

For a constituent assembly and a new Canadian constitution

By Ross Dowson

Part 1 (of 3)

Constitutional crisis puts Canada in question

Analyzing the roots of Canada's evolution

(from Forward, May 1977)

The cry of Unity is echoing across the country. A flood of pronouncements issuing out of the offices of Ottawa's mandarins and from Prime Minister Trudeau himself (The Privy Council has set up a special unit, and the appointment of a Commissioner-General for National Unity is being considered) are being spread wholesale by the mass media.

Save Canada —but from what or whom? Unity—but with whom and for what? The demagogic torn aside, what we are being asked to do is rally to the maintenance of the status quo; an admission that, for very good reason, it is falling down all around us. We are being asked to rally in resolute ranks behind the constitution, the BNA Act, glossed up as a sacred pact of the people agreed upon by the Founding Fathers only 110 years ago. Or that we should go along with those who, adopting a more reasonable approach, would consider modifying the BNA Act in some respect, possibly easing off some its centralizing aspects or by making other adjustments, but only all the more to hold onto its very essence.

Getting more to the point, it means blocking the Québécois from establishing their national sovereignty! Cool the heat from the Native People's demands for recognition of their nationhood and lands being coveted by the ecologically reckless, plundering lumber and oil moguls, and the pressures mounting from the widespread dissatisfaction with unemployment, the wage freeze, social service cutbacks, etc.

On the other hand, however, there are a growing number who consider that the time is ripe to face the facts and open a full wide-ranging discussion on every aspect of the Canadian condition and to advance towards taking all the necessary actions that would prepare a new constitution – one that would lay the basis for a Canada that could meet the challenges of the day.

There is much at stake. This is the most crucial debate in Canada's history. We are in a struggle over the minds of the people. Will they

be won to support the forces for social change, or will they be led to support or at least accept what the ruling class assesses is possible to get away with in the preservation of its interests?

Success for those who cover themselves with appeals to Canadian Unity and the sacredness of the constitution can only lead to the violation of the rights of the Quebec nation, of the powers of the Quebec National Assembly and its PQ majority, to frustrate a yes vote in the referendum on Quebec sovereignty and independence. Even an insane military-police assault against the people of Quebec is not absolutely excluded.

Québécois and Native Peoples' struggles

For there should be no mistake. The November 15 PQ electoral victory was no fluke, but signaled a qualitative leap in the 200-year-long struggle for Quebec equality. A rapidly growing majority are convinced that equality can only be realized by independence. Their struggle has proved beyond all possible doubt to be an irrepressible one, making its resolution in independence, certainly in the long run, largely inevitable. No other force in Canadian society, no matter what its impact in the short run, can decide that—only the Québécois. Any repeat of the 1970 assault under the War Measures Act which was to shock Quebec into submission, would be even more counter-productive—resulting in a struggle that would tear Canada apart from coast to coast in civil war.

The fight of the Québécois to win national sovereignty over the second most highly developed sector of the Canadian economy has already raised its working class struggles to a high level of social consciousness and combativity, and will continue to pose challenges of a profoundly radical social character. The rise in anticipations of the Québécois have developed parallel to and have given added impulse to the struggles of the Native peoples, and in particular to the Dene Nation and the Inuit Tapirisat. Together the Native peoples are laying claim to a colossal slab of territory which, with the developing world energy crisis, is becoming increasingly vital to the Canadian and, for that matter, U.S. economy.

These two challenges alone have placed all previous concepts of Canada, the powers of its central government in Ottawa, provincial rights, and indeed the very foundations upon which Canada was structured, into question.

What is more, they have developed within the context of an even more general problem, which has no doubt also fueled them—the continuing erosion of Canada itself as a sovereign nation into a dependency and a satellitic relationship to the United States colossus on its southern border. The key and commanding heights of the Canadian economy are now controlled by foreign – largely U.S.– imperialist interests.

As ex-Liberal leader Mel Hurtig recently expressed it, “In the eight years Pierre Trudeau has been prime minister of this country. foreign ownership has grown by a greater amount than during the entire first century of Confederation.” This has resulted in an outflow of dividends, interest payments and repayments on foreign investments that have skyrocketed the financial cost of production, as distinct from labor costs, from less than 3% in 1972 to 31.1% in 1975. Today Canada's external debt is greater in relation to its gross national product than crisis-wracked Britain's.

The federal government's policy to meet the grave decline in the economy through its projected New Society, has resulted in planned disemployment of over a million workers, the largest in its history. And in the hope of stimulating the economy Ottawa is removing the largely tokenist restrictions that it had earlier imposed on foreign investment. It is clearing the way for the development of the environmentally dangerous Alaskan Highway (Alcan) gas pipeline which cuts an energy corridor through Canada that is beneficial only to the U.S. power moguls amounting to the Canadian version of the Panama Canal, furthering U.S. domination of the Canadian economy and increasingly locking it into the U.S. economy and its rulers' aims on the world political arena.

This undermining of Canadian national sovereignty has heightened longstanding regionalism which, with the rise of the PQ, has thrown both the Liberal and Tory parties of big business into turmoil where neither can claim to be truly national parties.

The unity cries, the appeals to rally to the constitution, to the BNA Act, in reality only affirm that there is a crisis of major proportions and that the constitution which only in a distorted way reflected the relationship of contending forces in 1867, now bears less and less semblance to the relationship of forces in this country today. In reality the BNA Act, still lying in the dusty files of Westminster not far from the residence of the Queen of England who was by fiat designated Canada's head of state, is nothing but a piece of paper.

The real constitution of Canada is now being reconstituted by the federal government. In its efforts to preserve as much of the status quo as possible through its appeals to the sacredness of the BNA Act of 1867 it is attempting to establish as favorable a relationship of class forces as possible for the Big Business interests it represents.

It is notable that the appeals of those who defend the Canadian constitution are completely devoid of any sweeping and lofty idealism. Canada's constitution was not forged in the flames of popular struggles or revolution. No leaders called for the mobilization of the masses in militant protests, town meetings or organized guerrilla actions, not to speak of a popular army, to end British colonialist domination. There was no Declaration of Independence or the Rights of Man. There were no Sam Adams, Patrick Henrys or even George Washingtons. The Canadian counterparts of those forces were bloodily crushed back in 1837 by the arms of the British Crown supported by the Chateau Clique and the Family Compact.

Far from being a pact between free Canadians the BNA Act was an act of law, passed not by a popular assembly here but by the imperial power of Great Britain. Confederation was a creation of the British imperial state in collusion with the heads of a colonial administration representing a nascent, dependent Canadian capitalist class. Accordingly, it aimed to block annexation to the United States. It was designed to secure British investments in the railways and open up the public treasury and cream off vast tracts of land for their expansion. It was designed to integrate the crown colonies in the West, to establish private ownership of the land which had been held in common by the Native peoples, and to open it up to the production of cheap grain to keep English mill-hands' wages competitive on the world market. Land was needed on which to dump the surplus British working class population and to develop a market for goods manufactured in the East and overseas.

The Fathers of Confederation shared a hatred and a fear of democracy. While plans were in their preliminary stages, Canada's first Prime Minister John A. Macdonald wrote Premier Tilley of New Brunswick that it was "important that the Bill should not be finally settled until just before the meeting of the British parliament. The measure must be carried per saltum (in one leap) and no echo of it must reverberate through the British provinces till it becomes law....

The Act once passed beyond remedy, the people would soon learn to be reconciled to it."

For George-E. Cartier universal suffrage meant “mob rule” which he saw as the cause of the American Civil War of 1861—the second great American Revolution which witnessed the destruction of the Southern Slavocracy and the rise of industrial capitalism. “Our attempt,” he wrote, “was for the purpose of forming a Federation with a view of perpetuating the monarchical element...In our Federation the monarchical principle would form the leading feature, while on the other side of the lines (the U.S.)...the ruling power was the will of the mob, the rule of the populace.”

The exclusion of the farmers and urban workers from the process was based on the recognition that its terms and conditions were in clear violation of their interests. Whereas, the Province of Canada two decades earlier had won an elective legislative council, the BNA Act imposed a non-elective Senate which Macdonald cynically cracked was to protect the interests of the rich – always a minority.

The New Brunswick electors voted down the Quebec resolutions. The PEI legislature voted no to confederation. The Newfoundland government when it finally moved to agreement was defeated at the polls. The vote in Quebec was held after the new constitution had been proclaimed and was in operation. It was supported by the powerful Catholic hierarchy with the admonition of the Bishop of Rimouski: "You will respect this new constitution that is given you as the expression of the supreme will of the legislator of the legitimate authority, and consequently that of God Himself." Nonetheless the Quebec electorate returned 20 opposition members to 40 government supporters.

Federalism against self-determination

The federalist principle, conceded to Cartier by the English Canadian capitalists who actually sought a unitary state gave nothing to the concept of a bi-national state and naturally neither did such opponents of democracy concede anything to the right of self determination.

The French fact was recognized primarily by linguistic and confessional rights. In a letter to a friend Macdonald wrote that “No man in his senses, can suppose that this country can, for a century to come, be governed by a totally unFrenchified government. If a Lower Canadian British desires to conquer he must ‘stoop to conquer’.”

Within a few years confederation was challenged both by the Indians and the Métis whose interests were completely ignored in the cynical real estate deal for the West with the Hudson's Bay Company. The republic that the Métis under Riel had set up was crushed—the

language rights of the French in what subsequently became the Province of Manitoba brutally denied.

Founded on capitalist property relations, while respecting vested seigneurial rights, the new capitalist state was a semi-autonomous federation of colonial provinces under the patronage of the British capitalists. Having firmed up their interests and ridding themselves of the costs of maintaining their imperial forces, the British retained the powers of decision in foreign relations and peace and war. The colonialist connection dragged Canada behind British imperialist aggression against the Boers in South Africa. As a British dependency, over the opposition of Quebec, Canada went into World War I. While Britain lost its hegemony over Canada to the U.S., the essential satellitic character of its ruling class thrust Canada, in the face of Quebec opposition, into World War II.

Within Confederation, which sped the growth of capitalism and the power of the indigenous capitalist class, Canada evolved from a British colony, to a British dependency, to a dependency of the United States.

On the basis of the relationship of class forces prevailing in 1867, sanctified by the BNA Act, the Canadian capitalist class have since built up a complex network of repressive institutions. It ranges from the Privy Council, to the Supreme Court, to the Bar Association, from the armed forces to the RCMP, from the Canadian Manufacturers Association to the Boards of Trade, from the Rideau Club to the local Kiwanis. Along with their ownership of the means of production they constitute what can be called a system—the Canadian capitalist system.

Rise of working class organizations

Parallel to that development, and capital's own special creation, rose the working class and its organizations. In a nascent stage of development at the time of Confederation, the working class movement has developed into the most massive and potentially most powerful formation in the country. This was demonstrated in the 1972 general strike of Quebec labor and the cross-Canada October 14, 1976 Day of Protest. It has developed an increasing consciousness of its needs through the formation of the NDP as its political arm. Its aim, as expressed in Labor's Manifesto adopted at the 1976 CLC convention, is the wresting of "power from business and its government in the interests of labor" in order to institute "a system of national and economic planning." This is a key component of the new reality.

It is not excluded that with Trudeau and its other leading spokesmen, the system can succeed in mobilizing sufficient support, through a policy of confrontation linked to limited concessions, to slow down and even to temporarily divert the forces that seek a restructuring of Canada in harmony with its real needs and the present relationship of forces in the country. But the odds that have long favored the frustration of the mounting democratic process are less favorable than they have ever been before. In Quebec the forces of the status quo are in disarray and have been pushed back into a defensive position all down the line. The tide appears to be running, so that it is possible to visualize not only the realization of the central aim of the PQ—the establishment of national sovereignty—but fundamental changes in the system itself in Quebec. It is now widely understood, by even those who oppose separation, that it is the right of the Québécois to self-determination up to and including separation and that it is a violation of elementary democracy to deny it. Besides, the declared social aims of the PQ and the social reforms that it is implementing have won wide support across the country.

The demands of the Native movements have struck a broad support among the Canadian people who are increasingly concerned about ecological dangers and are for the planned and social utilization of the natural resources long said to be the property of the entire nation. Native land claims are not at all an infringement on their popular accessibility but are directed to their control against the well-known ravages that have been perpetrated by the robber barons and monopoly capitalists—from Reed Paper to Imperial Oil.

The rise of the Quebec and Native peoples' struggle have opened the way for all the other broad and popular democratic forces to intervene and to help shape the country to the form they think necessary. The widespread opposition to U.S. domination of the Canadian economy and its linkage to the global strategies of U.S. imperialism, the broadening women's rights movement, the movements for freedom of sexual orientation and freedom of choice on childbearing, the prisoners' rights movements, and above all the trade union movement.

It is now possible to move out on a massive scale to commence the building of a new Canada. The appeals for unity and to save Canada are designed to block this opportunity, at best to dribble out a few concessions which have as their purpose to preserve the undemocratic essence of the BNA Act and the entire superstructure that capitalism has built upon it.

The growing support for the call for a Constituent Assembly must take on massive proportions and the whole process for its realization must rapidly get underway.

The profoundly democratic demand for a Constituent Assembly must become a physical reality. It would provide a vast public forum, an arena for the exchange of all ideas about all the problems and possibilities confronting Canada. It would provide the basis for a consensus that would result in the drafting of a provisional constitution. And it would provide elections that would assure representation in a popular assembly of every and all viewpoints that would keep all options open for an advancing Canada.

(End of Part 1 of 3) (Part 2 – See 1977-July-Forward No. 28)

QUEBEC AND THE CANADA CRISIS

For a constituent assembly and a new Canadian constitution

By Ross Dowson

Part 2 (of 3)

(from *Forward*, July 1977)

The social dynamics of the Quebec nationalist movement

Trudeau leads federalist attack against Parti Québécois

The following is the second installment of a three part article on the constitutional crisis now confronting Canada. The first, appearing in the May 1977 issue, dealt with the BNA Act and Confederation. Copies can be obtained by writing to FORWARD, Box 778, Adelaide St. P.O., Toronto.

By Ross Dowson

Confederation, the structuring of Canada into a single national state, imposed on its components of 1867 by the nascent indigenous capitalist class in collusion with British imperialist interests, contained, but it by no means eliminated several explosive elements.

The Fathers of Confederation anticipated that the conquered nations of Quebec and the Native Peoples (Indian, Métis and Inuit) would be constrained and ultimately assimilated in the case of the former, and in the case of the latter, driven to the outer edges of the community and destroyed as an effective force.

But 79 years after the British conquest. Lord Durham in his report following the brutal defeat of the 1837 revolutionary uprisings against the British yoke in both Lower and Upper Canada informed the British Foreign Office, “I expected to find a contest between a government and a people. Instead I found two nations warring in the bosom of a single state.”

Lord Durham expressed the anticipation of those who looked to the destruction of the French nation through the processes of assimilation, with the words: “...it will be acknowledged by everyone who has observed the progress of Anglo-Saxon colonization in America that sooner or later the English race is sure to predominate even numerically ally in Lower Canada (Québec) as they predominate already by their superior knowledge, energy and wealth. The error, therefore, to which the present contest must be attributed, is the vain endeavor to

preserve a French Canadian nationality in the midst of Anglo-American colonies and states..."

Nonetheless the French-Canadian nationality has been more than preserved. Inflamed by the hanging of Riel and the destruction of the Métis Republic, the conscription of her youth for the foreign World Wars I and II, sustained for many years by conservative clerical forces, until, following the so-called Quiet Revolution of the sixties, in November 1976 it took the stage as the Parti Québécois in power in the Quebec National Assembly.

What is the PQ and what are the general configurations of the movement which it heads? Will the sovereign Quebec state which it projects be socialist as the editors of the *Globe and Mail* and *Financial Post* warn or will it be a xenophobic, racist, even fascist state as, others are so bold as to suggest? And with Quebec wrenched out, what is the future for anglophone (*English-speaking –ed.*) Canada? Will it survive as a nation, or will the continuing process of economic integration with the U.S. result in its complete structural integration?

Pierre Elliott Trudeau, whom the noted historian Arthur Lower has described as "the country's sheet anchor" around whom "Like it or not all those who love their country must rally... (since) he represents the only adequate bridge between two people," has led the assault on the PQ and its declared aim of the establishment of a sovereign Quebec nation state.

In Saskatoon this spring he charged the PQ with being a fifth column, an insidious enemy within Canada which "wants to destroy this country" and urged that its representatives be barred from getting a hearing—"they are trying to con you," he warned.

At one of his weekly news conferences in June, Trudeau in effect rejected any discussions with Quebec government officials. As a precondition he said that "he wants to make sure that Mr. Lévesque (*leader of the Parti Québécois –ed.*) ... wants to remain in Confederation." And "I am not in favor of the thesis put forward that the premier of Quebec is speaking on behalf of a founding people."

In an early May interview with Agence France Presse, and in a speech at Laval University, he not only attacked the established criteria that define any nation, including Quebec as a nation. He ridiculed the very "idea that a nation must be sovereign." He flung the label of "ethnocentrism" on the policy of the PQ—a term which the widely syndicated Southam Press columnist Charles Lynch conceded is nothing but a "polite term for racism."

The common thread that runs through the arguments of nearly all those who have succumbed to the high-powered campaign for Canadian national unity is the failure to recognize that the francophones of Quebec, the overwhelming majority of its population, are a nation, an oppressed nation within the Canadian state and by that fact have the elementary democratic right to self-determination, up to and including separation itself.

The term colony (a colony of Anglo-Canadian and U.S. capital) sometimes used to describe Quebec, and Canada itself, as a colony of the U.S. instead of clarifying only confuses the question. The economy of Quebec unlike the so-called underdeveloped world, the Third World, is not agrarian, but that of the advanced capitalist world which, while suffering from elements of regional underdevelopment, is essentially the same as the rest of Canada. The central form of class antagonism is the conflict between capitalism, (Anglo-Canadian, U.S. and a dependent Quebec capitalism) and a highly urbanized, unionized and militant working class. Nationalism is not solely the credo of the tiny Quebec middle class but permeates the consciousness of the working class heightening its class unity and combativity. Lise Payette, the popular PQ minister of consumer affairs and financial institutions, attacked the business community last month with exercising "shameful blackmail" of the government, charging it with being people "without a flag, without nationalism and without a sense of identity."

The state forms are of a bourgeois democratic character. While the struggle for an independent Quebec has been projected by some as posing a socialist revolution and even armed struggle, the PQ's winning an electoral majority in the Quebec Assembly gave the struggle for a sovereign Quebec a qualitative leap forward. The PQ government accused by its federalist opposition of already acting as if it headed a sovereign state has been implementing legislation such as its French language law that would appear to almost guarantee a "yes" vote for Quebec sovereignty in the coming referendum. It would appear that Quebec independence is going to be won in the cold way (*i.e., a transformation of bourgeois state relations rather than socialist independence –ed.*). While nothing is excluded, there is no longer talk about federal armed intervention against separation—it is apparent that any such adventure would tear apart the country from coast to coast in an irreconcilable civil war.

What has sustained the consciousness of the Québécois that they do indeed constitute a nation is largely their cultural oppression—the denial of their language rights, outside the borders of Quebec where they are being assimilated, but above all in Quebec where they constitute the majority.

Trudeau, in a recent speech in Winnipeg, presented facts which explain above all the alienation of the aspiring Québécois middle class professional. "The population of Quebec is more than 80% French-speaking. Yet out of Quebec's 100 largest business firms, only four have five or more French-Canadian executives—and 43 of these firms do not have a single French Canadian in their senior ranks." He also noted that while francophones constitute 27% of the Canadian population they constitute less than 15% in the federal public service.

The parliamentary commission hearings that the PQ government has been holding on its proposed language Bill 1, an avidly followed public forum, recently heard Yvon Charbonneau, president of the French-speaking teachers' union—the Centrale de l'Enseignement du Québec, present its 93-page brief.

Charbonneau explained the class character of the language question. "The alienation of the Québécois people, a people of wage earners in search of a fatherland, is first economic in nature: it derives from the position that its overwhelming majority occupies in the process of production: the bottom of the ladder." Cultural Development Minister Camille Laurin enthusiastically responded that the PQ bill to francisize the Quebec economy, to make French the language at the work place, is to get at the roots of "the economic alienation" of the Québécois.

The election of the PQ government was widely celebrated. While they subsequently recanted, almost the entire NDP leadership, along with union leaders such as McDermott of the UAW, hailed it. After all, the defeat of Bourassa constituted a body blow to the capitalist party par excellence, the Liberals—a blow from which their Quebec wing has yet to show the slightest sign of recovery. The response of the so-called revolutionary left—that nothing had changed—only revealed its own myopia. The PQ victory not only signified a new opening for the Québécois, which they readily understood, but also for anglophone Canadian politics.

Of course the PQ is neither a socialist nor a labor party. It is a petit-bourgeois party, its leadership largely composed of middle class professionals and technocrats with a background that is even more solidly respectable than any government in the country. While the editors of the Toronto *Globe and Mail* and the *Financial Post* label them socialist, neither the party's program nor its leadership, for all their promised reforms, present a consistent anti-capitalist perspective, although Lévesque has said the party is socialist on the Swedish model. It is the rupture that its meteoric growth and election into office has brought to Quebec society, the mass character of the party which

makes it the most popularly rooted in the country, the high anticipation of its ranks reflected in the party's endorsement by the Quebec Federation of Labor, that open up such possibilities for social change in Quebec and the rest of the country.

The PQ is a nationalist party firmly committed to the establishment of an independent and sovereign Quebec. While the leadership is now in the process of opportunistically laying aside some of its social program and it is not excluded that some elements may capitulate to the high-powered opposition of federalism, as a party it is being persistently firmed up and evermore irrevocably committed to independence. With the formal establishment of Quebec sovereignty its popular, largely working class base, will be confronted with the challenge of what to do with that sovereignty, with the question of what kind of Quebec they wanted to build. While the PQ is not a labor party its rise has continued to pose the question of such a party which it would now seem certain can only come out of further experiences of the class with the PQ. Thus the PQ would appear to be a highly unstable and even transitional form in the continued radicalization of the Québécois.

The national aspirations of the Québécois, rooted in some 250 years of oppression, and which have given the working class struggles there a sharp cutting edge, have never been understood by the federalist-oriented reformist NDP and CLC leadership —particularly that wing that functions primarily as an extension of the U.S.-based so-called international unions. The rigidity of the CLC leadership, modified only at the 1974 Vancouver convention, left important sectors of the working class to unionize outside of its ranks and to realize unity of action only in the Common Fronts.

The struggles within the Quebec CCF to tune the party into the national aspirations of the Québécois led by Jean-Marie Bédard, Michel Chartrand and others were frustrated and defeated by the Ottawa leadership. This false policy of the CCF-NDP leadership has had the two-fold result of **one**; dooming the CCF-NDP to the existence of a tiny irrelevant sect which it remains to this day, and **< b. two**; leaving the situation open so that such a formation as the PQ would arise to fill the gap.

This confusion in the anglophone working class movement is typified by the editorial that appears in the April issue of *True North*, a monthly sponsored by a wide range of union leaders in the Sudbury district. It declares that nationalism in Quebec represents only the interests of the middle class, "the injured egos of 2% of the population of Quebec." Echoing the witch-hunt charges that Trudeau has leveled

at the CBC. "using both the French and English language media both in Quebec and the rest of Canada," this tiny middle class, according to Editor Carl Dow, actually "created the cultural conditions for the election of the PQ." This same 2%, while Quebec, under the union leadership, "stood on the threshold of real social reform... seized an opportunity to subvert this genuine democratic social and economic development." Dow caps off his version of history as conspiracy with a warning about nationalism—including the nationalism of oppressed peoples—not to "forget the lessons of Hitler and his National Socialists, and the wormy workings of Mussolini, to say nothing of the right-wing nationalist governments of today in Africa and South America and Asia."

Grace McLnnis, the daughter of CCF founder J.S. Woodsworth and NDP MP for nine years, lends herself to an interview in the series that the editors of the *Toronto Star* state quite frankly seek "opinions on how to persuade Quebec to remain in Confederation." She too concentrates her fire not on the perpetrators of national oppression but upon nationalism, which she warns "can be devastatingly dangerous... Where nationalism and socialism are found in one group of individuals," she says, "there will be a conflict and nationalism is always going to win." According to McLnnis, separatism doesn't stem from the masses in Quebec but merely from feelings of insecurity in working people. The answer is "give people jobs..."

In this, McLnnis merely follows the line of NDP leader Broadbent whose top priority is not to popularize the legitimate grievances of the Québécois and to defend the right of the Québécois nation to self-determination, but to keep the country together. Noting that "you find that fully 40% of Quebecers under the age of 30 now are moving in a separatist direction" he has been appealing to the Trudeau government to initiate a job creation program aimed at young Québécois. With such a program by a government which has declared it has no solutions to the present economic crisis, according to advisor Broadbent "we'd win the battle, if you like, for the hearts and minds of those who are not yet committed to separatism by that clear demonstration of a national government that cares for Quebecers."

While Quebec's course towards national sovereignty is proving ever more clearly, in the words of Lévesque, to be irreversible, and thus the question of what is to become of anglophone Canada is ever more on the order of the day, the central focus of Ottawa's pan-Canadian campaign remains Quebec. By concentrating it there Ottawa hopes to hold anglophone Canada together as a bloc of forces against Quebec. Besides the key decision is to be made in no place other than Quebec by none other than the Québécois.

Of course Trudeau is not addressing himself to the PQ and the growing forces for Quebec national sovereignty. He has declared irreconcilable war against them. Trudeau is trying to rally together and firm up every rag-tag and bob-tail of opposition to the PQ referendum in Quebec, to overcome the petty schisms between the Liberals, the Progressive Conservatives, the Union Nationale and the Créditistes. He is out to consolidate whatever forces of opposition that he can scrape together, to polarize the opposition to a "yes" vote in the referendum on national sovereignty.

By so doing, of course, he polarizes the forces which favor a "yes" vote in the referendum. All the dynamics of the situation favor a "yes" vote. Should the vote register a defeat for independence it cannot be a final answer, for the Québécois' struggle is inevitable and irrepressible. And all the while the processes of disintegration continue to work away at the rest of Canada, continuing to pose the need for a constituent assembly to prepare a new constitution that will serve twentieth century Canada in a world that is in the process of fundamental change.

(end of Part. 2 of 3) (see Part 3 in Forward, September, No. 29)

QUEBEC AND THE CANADA CRISIS

For a constituent assembly and a new Canadian constitution

By Ross Dowson

Part 3 (of 3)

A Constituent Assembly & a new Constitution

A way out of the Confederation crisis

(From Forward, Sept. 1977)

This is the final installment of a three-part article on the constitutional crisis now confronting Canada. The first, appearing in our May 1977 issue, dealt with the BNA Act and Confederation. The second dealt with the social dynamics of the Quebec nationalist movement and appeared in our June-July issue. With the publication of this article, which marks the completion of the series, the editors of Forward will be publishing them together in pamphlet form. We hope that with the help of our readers this will widen the circulation of this important material.

By Ross Dowson

As Ottawa acted to firm up its control of the oil and gas-rich North West Territories and head off the mounting Native rights movement there, by moving towards transforming its stooge Territorial Council to provincial status, the Indian Brotherhood of the NWT responded.

The Brotherhood called for the scrapping of the Territorial Council July 15, when it denounced it as ignoring "the existence of two aboriginal nations in the North with their own functioning systems of governments, (and which) lumps us together in an oppressive institution based on non-native practice." It demanded the division of the Territories into three—one with a majority of Dene, one with a majority of Inuit, and one with a majority of non-natives—each with "wide powers roughly resembling those of a province and a system of government democratically determined by its citizens."

No doubt with its ability to serve the giant U.S. oil consortiums uppermost in its mind, Ottawa's response to the demands of the Native movement was the same as its response to the Québécois claim that they constitute a nation. Legislative authority and governmental jurisdiction, the cabinet intoned, "are not allocated in Canada

on the grounds that differentiate between people on the basis of race." George Erasmus, president of the National Indian Brotherhood, ridiculed the cabinet's pretensions: "Very clearly what the federal government continues to support are ethnic governments so long as they are oppressed, as are the people in reserves in the south."

At the same time as the Dene and Inuit peoples issued their declaration of independence from the restraints of Confederation, Native peoples in the south voiced their demands. Ontario's 20,000 Cree and Ojibway Indians of the Grand Council Treaty 9 presented a 10-point declaration of rights to Ottawa. President Andrew Rickard summed up their aim, to "create a nation—a free and sovereign nation—within a nation." They claim about half the province of Ontario as their own—some 210,000 square miles of the Ontario far north whose waters drain into Hudson's and James Bay. The 1,600 member Peigan band in southern Alberta has recently filed a \$25 million claim in the federal court against some 23,500 acres of reserve land surrendered in 1909 "through undue influence and gross breach of trust."

But it is Quebec and its struggle for national sovereignty that constitutes the most immediate and chief threat to the federalist strait-jacket, and the most powerful of the forces that can lead to the restructuring of this country to meet the needs of its working people in 1977-on.

The passing of the law that requires all corporations in Quebec to undergo francisation, that establishes French as the sole official language in the courts and in the National Assembly, and firmly embeds French as the language of instruction in the schools, won a tumultuous response right across Quebec. And no wonder. It is the first significant gain to be registered in the 200-year-long struggle for Québécois rights which saw the election of the Parti Québécois into office in the Quebec National Assembly less than a year ago. Following this victory the PQ moved to establish the ground rules of the popular plebiscite or series of plebiscites which its leadership is convinced will see the Quebec people opt out of Confederation as an independent Quebec state with an associate status with anglophone Canada.

Both of these developments roused a bitter and despairing response from the Liberal government, its Big Business sponsors, the loyal opposition, and their divers hangers-on across the country. Trudeau, as head of government and the chief architect of federal laws, responded by openly expressing his support of those now flagrantly violating the laws passed by the legally-elected Quebec legislature. He likened the actions of those seeking to maintain their privileged positions in Quebec society through their children's non-

compliance with the law, to those who defied conscription for overseas service in World War II, which the party he now leads enforced in the face of a plebiscite that registered an overwhelming majority of Québécois opposed. His government has made it known that it will support any challenge that may be made as to the legality of the Quebec legislation in the allegedly impartial federal courts.

With the election of the PQ to power in the Quebec National Assembly the parties of Canadian federalism went into shock. After puerile efforts to convince themselves that the PQ's election was merely the expression of the Québécois' desire for "good government," and having finally had to face the fact that whatever else the PQ stands for it is firmly committed to the establishment of Quebec sovereignty, all the parties of the status quo settled down to a powerful and systematic campaign which alternates between menacing threats and gestures at Quebec to sweet words of endearment.

There was the battle of the balance sheets—that Confederation, the PQ's facts notwithstanding, actually pays off. To the astonishment of these cynics there has been a widespread Québécois response that freedom is well worth whatever the price exacted.

After seeing the failure of reasoning together over the dollar-and-cent "facts" of Confederation it was only a small step to the petulant threats by federal and provincial government heads that in no way would they ever agree to any associate status with an independent Quebec. But who can believe that Ontario could terminate its long-standing integrated profitable trade relations with a Quebec gone independent, particularly when its own economy continues to slide into depression as profits fall, unemployment spreads and Ontario business, to save itself, desperately seeks markets in other independent states half way across the world. To cut off one's nose to spite one's face is not only painful, but a peril to one's own life.

As for the ultimate weapon—the threat, and then having to carry through with the real thing—the violent overthrow of the legally-elected PQ government and the imposition of a military-police rule in Quebec!

Just what persuasive power is there in such threats when the real thing was carried out and only a short six years ago, with Trudeau's enforcement of the War Measures Act, the military-police occupation of the province and the forcible detainment without charge of hundreds of Québécois in jail? Who can deny that this violation of Quebec rights played a significant role in the subsequent PQ victory?

And if Ottawa today or in the future were to carry out such a threat against a PQ government, would it not be even more counter-productive? And how would it extricate itself from such a situation? What would such an event mean to the Québécois and to the working-class movement of anglophone Canada—where would it end? Such a solution would only be the ultimate desperation.

Then there is the high-powered campaign that attempts to reduce this longstanding historic freedom struggle of an entire people down to the lowest plane of personal relations—the urgings that each anglophone Canadian should show a real friendship for the Québécois, that he/she should demonstrate it by learning French, by visiting Quebec, and above all by demonstrating a passion for Confederation. And so it goes—let's not break up what can be a beautiful Confederation between us, and if not for your own sake as a Québécois, let's live with it, change some the rules perhaps — but let's keep it together—if only for the sake of us anglophones!

The Québécois have likened Confederation to a prison. They conceive of themselves as on the point of breaking out of this prison to establish a new, independent and free relationship. Why now should they concern themselves about what is to become of the prison from which they are escaping, or with the rules or the amendments of rules that have so long governed their incarceration? And why should they concern themselves with what is to become of those, who, even if they had no choice, were guards or in some other way defenders or apologists of the prison? The prisoners, in liberating themselves, whether the guards realize it or not, have also liberated them — from their thankless duties.

Behind the wild veerings from threats to amorous blandishments of the Trudeau government, the opposition Tones and, unfortunately the NDP parliamentary leadership, lies the simple and apparent fact that they have no program at all to meet the situation which the PQ victory has placed under the spotlight — the bankruptcy of Confederation.

At the same time as the PQ victory answered the longstanding question What does Quebec Want? — it threw Canada and Confederation itself into question. The crisis confronting the federalists is the crisis of Confederation as it evolved from the British conquest by arms, to the imposition of the BNA Act by fiat of the British colonial office, in alliance with a nascent, dependent Canadian capitalist class, and the bits and pieces that have been added to it to hold the expanding country together as it slipped into a position of a dependency of U.S. imperialist power.

The PQ victory which has set Quebec off in the direction of establishing its national sovereignty has unhinged Canada. All the efforts, all the projections of the Trudeau government and its loyal opposition are based on attempts to sanctify Confederation and are directed to turning Canadians back from coming to grips with the new reality, to returning to a situation that history has proven unworkable, and to which it is now no longer possible to return.

However, there is a program—one which can turn the crisis of Confederation into a new beginning. That program resides in the collective intelligence of the Canadian people and their capacity to act in their own interests. The way to develop that program and to mobilize the forces to implement it lies in the calling of a constituent assembly that can work out a constitution for Canada and set up appropriate structures.

Ever since November 15 in the various public forums and discussions in assorted journals of opinion, the idea of a constituent assembly to work out a new constitution has continued to appear. It has received notable support from the editors of the influential liberal journal *Canadian Forum*, which in its June-July issue published "A Proposal For a New Constitution" over the name of The Committee For a New Constitution. The endorsers of this appeal include in their ranks the most prominent liberal-left personalities in the country, including leading academics in the field of history, political studies, and political science from all the major universities in anglophone Canada.

A serious weakness in its support is the absence of any representative leaders of the organized labor movement and the parliamentary leaders of the NDP. However this may well be in the process of being rectified.

The chief merit of their statement is that it starts off by recognizing "the right of Quebec to choose their own constitutional future by free and democratic means." Noting that Quebec is now in the process of coming to a decision about its constitutional future, its authors state that "we are prepared to accept the democratic verdict of that electorate when it is determined," whatever it may be. Meanwhile, they state, "it is essential for English-speaking Canada also to debate the principles of its continuing life."

They affirm their belief that Canada "exists as a viable national community" with a "will to survive as an independent nation regardless of the choice that the people of Quebec may make about their future" and "we should be working to devise a new constitution." They state "we do not believe that Canada without Quebec must break up into weak fragments to be inevitably absorbed into the United States."

The fear that Canada, with its own institutions, with its mass labor party and its NDP governments and more advanced social legislation, *without Quebec*, will lose what little independence that has not already been forfeited to U.S. imperialism and will completely collapse into the maw of the world's super-imperialist power, is a widely held one as this debate has already revealed. This fear of the "absorption of Canada into continentalism" has caused Larry Pratt, author of *Alberta Tar Sands* and professor of political science at the University of Alberta, to refuse to sign the statement. He charges its willingness to accept Quebec's opting out as amounting to endorsing Canada's "destruction from within". Others are opposing the consolidation of the Quebec trade union movement into an autonomous national structure as splitting the Canadian union movement and weakening it before the onslaughts of capital.

But the appeal to unity upon which such arguments are based mistakes a unity in words, for a genuine unity, a unity with content. There can be no unity that is not based on free association.

After outlining the various options open to Quebec, the document states that "in event that Quebec chooses independence with association, the rest of Canada should be in a position to propose terms of association."

They urge the appointment of a constitutional commission to "hear and study the suggestions of all Canadians who wish to participate," and "the creation of a popularly elected constituent assembly charged with drafting a new constitution. Preparations for this assembly could be made while the constitutional commission is doing its work. The report of the constitutional commission would form the initial basis of discussion in this constituent assembly. This constituent assembly would draft a constitution, including provision for terms of association with Quebec (in the event that Quebec should so opt) which would then be submitted to public ratification."

Back in the Mid-February issue of *Forward* its editors announced their support of the call for a constituent assembly. They urged that pressure "be mounted across the country to force the present government to issue such a call and allocate the necessary public funds to get the process underway. Should it balk," they suggest, "the governments of Saskatchewan and Manitoba and/or the Canadian Labor Congress with support of other popularly based organizations could take initiatives on their own that could force the government to act—or failing that, themselves set the process underway so that it would establish its own legitimacy..."

"Among the many things this would involve would be the striking off of a broad representative impartial commission with ample funds and all government facilities at its disposal, including prime radio and TV time, that would hold open sessions at all key points in the country. There, spokespersons from all political, cultural, social organizations and bodies, even individuals, could present papers and amplify their views on a new constitution for Canada..."

"These discussions would inevitably deal with such important questions as whether a 20th century Canada would want as its head of state a Queen of another country, whether it should have an appointed Senate restricting the powers of the elected assembly, what the authority and term of office of the assembly would be, whether it would have representation on the basis of professions, of trades, from places of work, whether or how much representation it would have from inherited wealth such as Trudeau, from lawyers, doctors, and whether representatives would be subject to immediate recall by their constituency.

"The preamble to the constitution or other supplementary documents such as a Bill of Rights would declare how Canadians see themselves in relation to other peoples of the world and what they conceive as the aim and fundamental nature of the society they are building in Canada. It would have to declare whether it is tolerable to have private ownership of our natural resources, not to speak of ownership subject to laws of another country, and whether it is acceptable in this day to leave the means of production in industry upon which the employment and the physical well-being of the people depends, under private ownership and operation on the motive of profit. The question of religion and the state, of religious instruction in the schools, and church ownership of revenue producing properties, would have to be outlined. It would enunciate general principles that would determine whether Canada could continue membership in such military alliances as NORAD and NATO. In dealing with human rights it would have to decide whether barring of discrimination on the basis of sex should not also include sexual orientation and whether abortion should continue to be in the criminal code and should not be a simple matter of personal choice.

"Following extended and free wheeling discussions involving the entire population a special sub-commission could be struck off. Then, guided by the many submissions it could draw up a draft of a constitution and any necessary supplementary documents. These drafts could again be subject to popular criticism and amendment and adjustment. Then they could be declared a provisional constitution upon which elections would be held and a representative assembly formed which

would adopt a constitution—and commence to legislate the country along its lines.

"Through the processes of working out a new constitution a tremendous awakening and unleashing of all the creative forces that reside in her peoples, particularly in the highly educated and skilled working class, would take place. The foundations for completely reshaping Canada, with all its magnificent natural resources and vast productive plant, would be firmly and truly laid..."

"Advance the call for a constituent assembly across anglophone Canada!"

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PRESS RELEASE

AUGUST 4, 1978

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NEIL TUDIVER, department of social work, University of Manitoba

A. L. WERNICK, professor of sociology, Trent University

STEPHEN WILLIAMS of *Exile and Toronto Life*

*organizations listed for identification only

The Deputy Minister of Justice in Ottawa will be the main witness for the Federal government in pre-trial hearings in a \$500,000.00 law suit against the Canadian government arising out of the controversy concerning allegations of R.C.M.P. wrong-doing.

The slander action was initiated last winter by Ross Dowson, the executive secretary of the League for Socialist Action, an organization declared "subversive" by the R.C.M.P. and named as a main reason for the R.C.M.P. investigation of the NDP-Waffle in the early 1970s.

Mr. Dowson's counsel, Harry Kopyto, announced that, "While we still await final confirmation from government lawyers that the Deputy Minister of Justice will be produced for pre-trial hearings, information we have obtained has led us to conclude that this individual is most knowledgeable about the NDP-Waffle investigation by the R.C.M.P. and that the investigation was directed by individuals at the ministerial and cabinet level with full knowledge and control over R.C.M.P. activities within the NDP."

"We have already obtained independent confirmation that the defence of the suit is being conducted by politicians who appreciate that their pleas of ignorance concerning R.C.M.P. wrong-doings are likely to be contradicted as the full facts of the R.C.M.P. investigation come forth through pre-trail hearings scheduled to commence October 11th."

In another development, four prominent U.S. citizens have expressed support for the slander action of Mr. Dowson, who is currently vice-president of the Rosedale NDP in Toronto.

In a statement signed by pediatrician Dr. Benjamin Spock, Nobel Prize winner Linus Pauling, well-known author Jessica Mitford and Dr. Noam Chomsky, a world-renowned linguist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the four declared that, "We believe that the charge of subversion has been used and is being used to justify intervention in the internal affairs and the harassment of such legal organizations as the New Democratic Party and the organized labour movement and we further believe that such activities threaten to whittle away at the democratic right to dissent in Canada."

(over)



COMMISSION OF INQUIRY CONCERNING CERTAIN ACTIVITIES OF THE ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

NOTICE OF HEARINGS

By December 7, 1978 the Commission will have completed most of its public hearings "regarding the policies and procedures governing the activities of the R.C.M.P. in the discharge of its responsibility to protect the security of Canada . . ." During January, 1978, the Commission held three hearings to receive briefs from the public. The commission has now scheduled further hearings at the times and places set out below for the purpose of receiving submissions from persons, groups and associations wishing to make their views known about what the laws of Canada should be in respect of the operations of the Security Service, what structure and organization it should have, what policies should apply to the relationship between elected officials and the Security Service, and about other important issues raised by the evidence already heard by the Commission. This will be the last opportunity for the public to make oral submissions to the Commission.

Sept 30 / 78

Any person, group or association wishing to make a submission at any of the hearings must first file a written brief with the Secretary of the Commission not later than one month prior to the date of the hearing at which it is intended to make the submission. Those who do not file their briefs within the prescribed time will not be able to make submissions orally at the hearing.

The hearings scheduled by the Commission are as follows:

Wednesday, December 13, 1978
Thursday, December 14, 1978
Tuesday, December 19, 1978
Wednesday, December 20, 1978
Tuesday, January 9, 1979
Wednesday, January 10, 1979
Thursday, January 11, 1979
Friday, January 12, 1979
Tuesday, January 23, 1979
Wednesday, January 24, 1979
Monday, January 29, 1979
Wednesday, January 31, 1979
Thursday, February 1, 1979
Friday, February 2, 1979
Monday, February 5, 1979
Tuesday, February 6, 1979

Toronto
Toronto
Montreal
Montreal
Fredericton
Halifax
St. John's
Charlottetown
Ottawa
Ottawa
Winnipeg
Regina
Calgary
Edmonton
Victoria
Vancouver

The times and locations of the hearings in each city will be advertised in the local newspapers several days before each hearing and those filing briefs will be advised directly.

Mr. Justice D. C. McDonald,
Chairman of the Commission.

D. S. Rickerd, Q.C., Commissioner

Guy Gilbert, Q.C., Commissioner

Chief Counsel to the Commission:

J. F. Howard, Q.C.

Secretary of the Commission:

H. R. Johnson
P.O. Box 1982
Station "B"
Ottawa, Ont.
K1P 5R5

Tel: (613) 593-7821

Clement adds new dimension to study of power

The Corporate Elite & US connection

by Ross Dowson

From the book **The Canadian Corporate Elite — an Analysis of Economic Power**, by Wallace Clement, that appeared three years ago, one could only conclude on the basis of his rigorous and documented research that Canada is an economic dictatorship, ruled by a small closed circle of financial and industrial capitalists.

"Top decision making positions in the economy and mass media in Canada," he wrote, "are dominated by a small upper class. Through dominant corporations they maintain a hierarchically ordered system by which they are able to extract surplus allowing them to continue and expand their control. This same surplus provides them with a life style much different than that experienced by the vast majority of Canadians and the privileges that accrue to them are passed on to their children."

He ended the prophetic sentence, "As long as corporate power is allowed to remain in its present concentrated state, there is no hope for equality of opportunity or equality of condition in Canada."

Since then the capitalist class, which Clement defines as not only the economic elite but includes all those "who own, control and/or manage (at a senior level) all corporations employing the labor of others, including their families" has got richer and indulges itself in ever more extravagant displays of its accumulated wealth.

Meanwhile inflation, aggravated by government imposed cutbacks in hard-won social legislation, and a freeze of wages, continues to gnaw away at and drive down the living conditions of the working class. And worse, over one and a quarter million have now been thrust out of the work force, in large part due to shutdowns of US branch plant operations such as INCO and Falconbridge, and deprived of even a source of income. Impoverishment and degradation widen as incredibly more and more plants that could produce needed goods are closed down.

That Clement's study, **The Canadian Corporate Elite** is firmly based on the economic reality of Canada, that it is grounded on a vast accumulation of empirical data, and what generalities it does draw flow simply and lucidly out of the logic and internal contradictions of this data, renders its conclusions largely unassailable by those economists and journalists who have prostituted their

skills to become apologists for the capitalist-inspired illusions of an open, expanding and increasingly equitable society.

That its conclusions are completely Marxist, that they affirm, not on the basis of a highly structured worked-out scheme, some select inviolable texts by Marx, Engels, Lenin or Trotsky, but on the basis of a study of contemporary Canadian empirical data, constitutes an all-the-more powerful affirmation of Marxism.

Nonetheless this book, which stands as the centerpiece in the accumulating studies of the Canadian political economy, roused uneasiness among some of the old and some of the growing number of new Marxists.

According to Robert Simms and Chris Schrenk, now associated with **Socialist Voice**, "Clement draws a conclusion that is at odds with those nationalists of the left who think that the corporate bosses in Canada are subservient and submissive to encroaching US capital." The evidence they think to be at odds with an opinion that they attribute to so-called left nationalists is flimsy to say the least! — a quotation: "the Canadian economy remains controlled in large part by a set of families who have been in the past and still remain at the core of the Canadian economy." Even more strange, they also allege that "Clement doesn't make plain in his book" that "there is a basic antagonism in Canadian society today between the capitalist ruling class in the Marxist sense and the working class."

Former Waffle leader Melville Watkins who thinks that Clement's new book has rectified the situation recalls in a recent issue of **Ontario Report** that he had interpreted the **Canadian Corporate Elite** as presenting an indigenous Canadian capitalist class and the US capitalist class, along with its comprador agents, as in "a full partnership."

In an evaluation appearing in the November 1975 issue of **Forward** we pointed to what we considered a weakness in the book. We said that it left "unsettled" a key question — the "question of US ownership and control of important sectors of the Canadian economy and its ramifications." In view of the great value of the book and Clement's assurance that he had two more studies in the works — one on the state system and another on the continental economy

of North America, we expressed impatience for "the second course of the feast."

It has now been served — in **"Continental Corporate Power — economic linkages between Canada and the United States**. And it is well worth all of our anticipations.

In **Continental Corporate Power** Clement comes to grips with the question of US ownership and control. With this new volume he gives the valuable material in his first one a context. He thereby raises his work as a whole to a higher plane. Together his two volumes now stand in an international, and above all, in a continental context which allows him to bring into play all the research of his peers, in particular the two volume **History of Canadian Business** by Tom Naylor (1975) along with **Partner to Behemoth — the military policy of a satellite Canada** — by John Warnock (1970) and the essays contained in **Canada Limited**, the

structure and provides some of the key materials to resolve the many political questions that have been the subject of contention within the Canadian Left.

Even given the overall value of the book, there are several sections that are really outstanding. In Part II of Chapter I Clement outlines the power of the corporation in contemporary capitalist society — the power base of the corporate elite and the capitalist class as a whole. Anyone who thinks that changes of any significance can be brought about without coming to grips with this all-pervasive and all-powerful institution, without upending the whole system that is based on the private ownership of the key means of production, and the establishment of a planned economy based on production for use under workers' control, could profitably ponder over these four pages.

Chapter III — Setting the Stage for a Continental Economy — is a major historical essay on the evolution of Canadian capitalism and a classic study in the application of the laws of uneven and combined development. In the latter chapters of the book Clement makes a detailed, innovative and rigorous analysis of continental corporate structures, of corporate concentration in the US and Canada, the dominant US corporations and their relations with Canadian corporations, and the interlocking of their directorships — their continental connections.

Rather than attempt to condense or paraphrase what we consider the most important sections of the book we are taking the liberty of excerpting some of Clement's key conclusions in the hope that they will stimulate a wide circulation of the book itself.

Canada as a US dependency

"Canada is an independent nation-state enveloped by spill-over from the most powerful capitalist society in the world, which includes some of the costs and benefits of that society's wealth. While Canada's economy is largely controlled and shaped by US capitalists, these capitalists do not operate in a complete power vacuum in Canada. What has been forged over the past century is an alliance between the leading elements of Canadian and US capital that reinforces mutually the power



Wallace Clement

policy of dependency (1973), **Close the 49th Parallel** (1970), etc. etc.

As long as the debate on Canada-US relations lacked such a setting and did not develop from an historical analysis of the evolution of the political economy of Canada it remained fragmented and lacked coherency. By making this book a study of Canada's place within a system of continental capitalism, by analyzing the developments of the US economy and its power structure, especially as they have affected Canada's economy and social structure, Clement lays the basis for arriving at a correct understanding of the Canadian economic and power

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and advantage of each ... This is an unequal alliance ... Canada's economy has been shaped to conform to the dominance of the United States."

"Canada cannot be characterized as an advanced independent capitalist society nor can it be grouped with the various peripheral nations often called 'The Third World' although it shares some traits of each type."

"Canada is a secondary power in the world economic order and has a distorted economic system because of its colonial origins and because its industrialization proceeded in the shadow of an industrial giant — shirt-tail development."

"Canada is a developed economy but underdeveloped industrially. Canada is, compared to underdeveloped societies, 'an affluent annex' in the sense of being a subsidiary or supplementary structure of the United States."

"When Canada is referred to as an

industrialized society, what is really meant is that part of it is industrialized — the rest is more aptly characterized as a resources hinterland."

"Since Canada's economy is at once developed and underdeveloped its economic elite is both powerful and dependent. To reduce the question to whether Canada is 'exploited or exploiter' dismisses the fact that its elite exhibits both qualities."

"The upshot is that the power of Canadians to make decisions about specific economic activities in Canada has regressed to a state of underdevelopment (although not total underdevelopment of 'material well-being') with control over future

between type; that is, much of this investment flows from firms in Canada which in turn are subsidiaries of other companies controlled outside Canada."

"Outside of bank and insurance and a few specific areas Canadian indigenous capitalism is not strong internationally although it does have an international presence. But within banking it is important."

"Overall, however, it would not be correct to view Canadian capitalists as imperialists in their own right. To the extent that they have participated in foreign investment, it has been largely in the remnants of the old British Empire and in the backwash of the United States. In some areas, particularly banking and life insurance, they have become important international actors, but not on the scale, or with political-military support from the Canadian state that could be considered independently imperialist. Were the United States umbrella to collapse, as the British Empire did earlier, they would be caught in the downpour."

Canada-US integration

"Canada is integrated with the United States not just on the economic level as recipient of a large volume of United States investment. The relationship also involved a good many Canadian capitalists whether elite members or managers who have benefitted by this arrangement. They project an ideology of internationalism and related to it an ideology of corporate capitalism."

"...multinationals corporations do not internationalize their own managements but they do denationalize a part of the national elite."

"An outstanding feature of these continental ties is the effect of economic sectors. They suggest that the financial-industrial axis is continental for Canada but national within the United States. The ties also reflect a pattern in which a segment of Canada's elite has been drawn into the inner circle of the US elite. While a segment of Canada's elite has gained continental power, Canadian society has been drawn into a relationship of dependence on the United States."

The State

"The state did not simply sit by while these developments transpired. It intervened **on behalf of the industry** ... Who controlled the pulp and paper industry? A good deal was

US controlled with some Canadian participation ... Only in production of hydro-electric power did the state resist US ownership. The resource industries, particularly pulp and paper, mining and aluminum, were the more active protagonists of cheap efficient power. Beginning with Ontario and over the years in most other areas the provinces took the lead in providing hydro-electric power. Why did the state take this action? The most thorough analysis of this question has been provided by H. Nelles, and his answer is clear: Power is far too precious as an agent of industrial expansion to be left under the control of monopoly capital, Canadian or American. As it had been with canals, and railways, the state would be the initiator of the necessary infrastructure of economic activity; it would provide the necessary conditions for private capital accumulation."

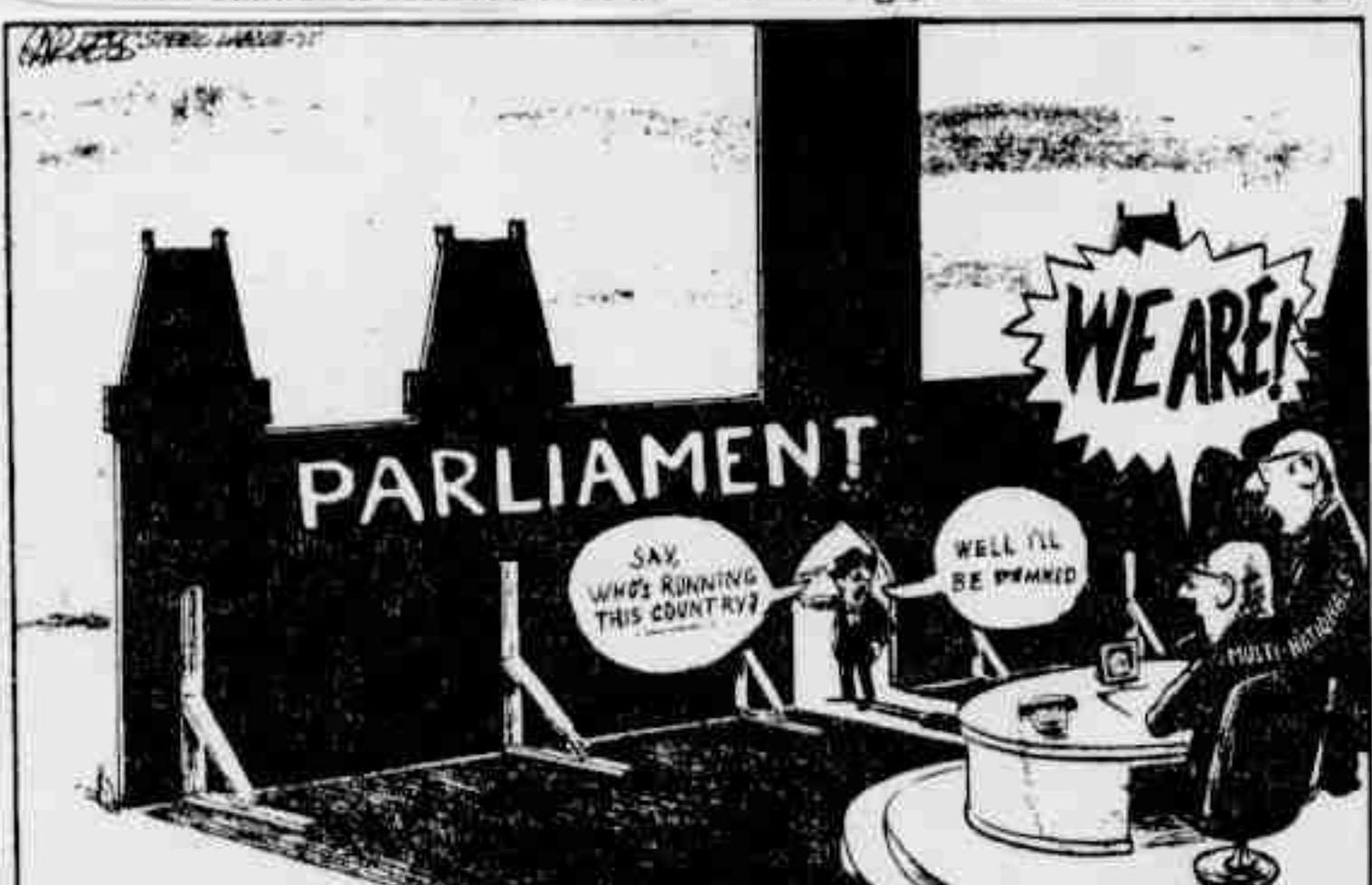
"Furthermore the conscious effort by US capitalists and their government was met by a like-minded Canadian state.... C.D. Howe, the great 'salesman' said in a speech in Boston in 1954, 'Canada has welcomed the participation of American and other foreign capital in its industrial expansion. In Canada, foreign investors are treated the same as domestic investors.' Prime Minister Louis St.-Laurent also supported Howe's position, arguing that foreign capital somehow became 'nationalized' once it had entered Canada."

"The political boundary between Canada and the United States has not, however, been an impediment to the penetration of the sphere of production in Canada by US foreign investment (although circulation, the protested.) The fact of such extensive proteted). The fact of such extensive US investment reflects political decisions to allow and encourage such a pattern of development. The system has emerged not in spite of politicians but because they have permitted it. Conversely, since they have allowed these events to occur, the national independence has been decreased and much of the control over Canada's economy has been allowed to shift outside the country to the board rooms of US corporations."

National sovereignty

"Certainly in the public domain the de facto rights of sovereignty are intact. But in liberal democracies, there is a very large area of private control beyond the public domain and it is in this area that sovereignty has been eroded. It is only because of the public/private split of liberal democracies that foreign dominance can prevail in one domain but only to a lesser extent in the other. How far can foreign dominance be allowed to go? Is the public domain not influenced by what happens in the private sphere? Most certainly it is, and when levels of foreign ownership become high the result is erosion of the autonomy of the state itself."

"The basic concern over foreign investment is that power is exercised in the board rooms of the multi-



development and stability lost because of the lack of an indigenously controlled base in manufacturing and resources ... The resulting fragmentation of the capitalist class does not mean that the whole class is not still powerful vis-a-vis the working class — indeed it may well have gained power because of its alliance with US capitalists in the continental context."

"...Canada's reliance on the United States has steadily increased and its other outside relations have declined dramatically ... Canada cannot easily withdraw from the continental economy and shift its trade elsewhere because now, unlike earlier periods, much of its 'trade' consists of intracompany transfers to United States parents. Canada is, therefore, locked into the continental economy, even if other nations challenge the world hegemony of the United States."

Canada as imperialist

"...a great deal of 'Canadian' foreign investment in the Third World and elsewhere is of this go-

nationals, out of reach of Canadians. Decisions on trade, employment, research and development, promotion of management, and investment are all beyond the control of Canadians. But is this really a consequence of foreign investment or of private investment? How much more control do the vast majority of Canadians have over the Royal Bank, Sun Life, Stelco, Eatons, or MacMillan Bloedel than they have over General Motors of Canada, Imperial Oil, Kresge's, Crown Zellerbach, or Canadian General Electric? Is it justifiable to call for decreasing foreign investment in the name of the Canadian people? To some extent, yes, the claim is justifiable because Canadian-based companies are potentially more susceptible to state regulation."

Consistent readers of **Forward** will be aware that the above quoted conclusions drawn by Clement are substantially the same as the views that have been advanced in the pages of **Forward** since its launching some four years ago. That holds true with Clement's last sentence too — "As long as the dominant mode of ownership continues to be private, the power of the economic elite will continue to dominate at the expense of the citizenry." The widening call for the public ownership of such operations as INCO in Sudbury is proof of an increasing awareness of that fact.

US ownership & control a dead end—Blakeney

Saskatchewan NDP Premier Allan Blakeney posed to the Canada West Alternatives Conference on Confederation in Banff, as a major issue before the country, foreign U.S. ownership and control of the economy.

He scored unnamed political leaders, who everyone knows include Liberal federal Finance Minister Chretien and Tory Ontario Treasurer McKeough, for beating the drum for increased U.S. investments.

"How naive and short-sighted we have become," he said. "How often must the cost of foreign ownership and control be totalled up before we finally conclude that such a road is a dead-end—not only economically but politically and culturally as well."

Blakeney projected no program that would place the working people of Canada in control of their economic destiny. And blocking Quebec sovereignty-association motivated his taking up the question. But then it was the outrageous blackmailing by the U.S. potash moguls that forced his government to overcome its reluctance to place the key sectors of the Saskatchewan potash industry under public ownership. Can we anticipate that mounting unemployment, in part due to closure of U.S. branch plant operations, could push Blakeney and the pusillanimous NDP leadership to campaign for the public ownership of major closed-down plants and their retooling for production of goods that Canadians can use or could market in other parts of the world? They could be bought out, if thought necessary, following deduction of all the grants handed out to them and, when possible, through long term debentures.

Life from Quebec, bet a Canadian newspaperman a \$200 dinner that his salary would never be disclosed.

The CP got special dispensation according to a SEC release, when among its arguments was one of principle — that revelation of the salaries of its executives would play into the hands of those Canadians who favor public ownership against private ownership. But US SEC officials saw things differently when the publicly-owned CNR came to sell 100 million dollars worth of debentures on the US market. Canada's Transport Minister Otto Lang felt compelled to intervene with a special plea for exemption. Among his arguments was that: "Obviously disclosure in the US would destroy confidentiality in Canada."

On this occasion SEC officials did not grant exemption and now, thanks to US law and the vagaries of its enforcers, we Canadians know that the wages we paid to the CNR president in 1975 were \$80,000, to the chairman \$65,000 and to the three vice-presidents \$73,000 each. You can only imagine what we don't know about this giant conspiracy against the public

Where to go for Cdn info

A heavy cloak of secrecy surrounds the giant corporations that make all the key decisions in capitalist society. Canadians know less than Americans, even when it comes to those corporations that fly the Canadian flag. And as far as the Trudeau government is concerned even the few bits of information that US government regulations demand as a matter of course are positively dangerous to our peace of mind.

US regulations require that officers and directors of public companies earning more than \$40,000 a year, whose shares are traded in the US, have to disclose their salaries. Of course the law is applied flexibly — so flexibly that when a request for disclosure under the US Freedom of Information Act was filed the chief Canadian Pacific Railways executive officer, Ian Sinclair, the same who is bandstanding the withdrawal of Sun

Fishermen challenging Ottawa's selling-out of Canadian sovereignty

Both the establishment of national sovereignty over the new 200 mile limit defining Canadian territorial waters and the role of foreign investment inside these waters are rousing the grave concern of fishermen on both the West and East coasts.

George Hewison, secretary-treasurer of the United Fishermen and Allied Workers Union, has accused Ottawa of selling out the industry in BC to US business interests. Federal negotiators are "bending over backwards to accommodate the Americans," he charges, in the high level talks which will determine new territorial waters for US and Canadian fishermen. When Washington declared the boundaries of US territorial waters last year, the new boundary for the US fishing zone ran through the middle of the Dixon Entrance at the top of the Queen Charlotte Islands, although the BC government had requested that the boundary follow, as on the East Coast, the continental shelf, and extend into the Gulf of Alaska.

The 200 mile limit on the East Coast, ostensibly designed to halt the destruction of the Grand Banks

through overfishing, and the faltering processing industry, some of it co-op owned, may only end up serving the interests of such West German fishing companies as Nordsee, a subsidiary of the giant multinational Unilever Corporation.

Nordsee has put in a bid to buy up a part-time fish plant at Harbour Grace which another Unilever subsidiary closed down in the 1960s with a loss of 800 jobs. It plans to operate with five deep sea trawlers which would knock out the small inshore boat operators now supplying the plant.

Richard Cashin, head of the Newfoundland Food and Allied Workers Union, charges that the deal would violate the very concept of the 200 mile limit and has attacked the Newfoundland government for its "colonial mentality." He warns that Newfoundlanders are destined to become nothing more than "white coolies" if the deal goes through.

NDP leader Ed Broadbent has joined the protest. While no one knows who will get the jobs on the five trawlers, he said, "I do know that if these trawlers are allowed to fish offshore cod stocks, the inshore fishing will be crippled."

Federal Fisheries Minister LeBlanc, expressing opposition to any "back door" takeover, suggested that there may be legislation to make large fishing companies divest themselves of fishing boats in the hope of increasing price competition to the advantage of the fishermen. But the obvious answer is to place this national resource industry under public ownership and planned development so that Maritime fishermen, who have been under the squeeze of the packers and processors for generations, could have a decent life.



Paul Chaisson, pres of Local 10 MFU

Stop branch plant closures!

by Jean Laplante

In one swoop, some 240 workers in St. Catharines were tossed into the ranks of the unemployed last month. Their jobs, their skills, their hard-established union Local 199 of the United Automobile Workers (CLC), their ability to sustain themselves and their families, wiped out by a decision of a corporation based in another country over which neither

they nor any segment of the Canadian people, nor governing institutions in Canada, have even a figment of control.

The decision, with all its ominous implications for the workers and the community, was made with a stroke of a pen by the owners of Columbus McKinnon Limited Corporation of Tonawanda, U.S.A. They unilaterally gave the order that closed down and disassembled the manufacturing facilities in the St. Kitts plant, turning it into a warehousing operation for goods being manufactured in U.S. plants to service the Canadian market.

Simultaneously, in Oshawa, nearly 200 workers organized in a United Steelworkers (CLC) local were shut out of the Fittings Limited plant. The U.S. owners decided to close down their plumbing division there. These are only two incidents in what is an increasingly common phenomenon. During late July and August, while fewer job opportunities were being created, some 1,150 jobs just disappeared through such shutdowns and closures of U.S. corporate owned branch plant operations in Canada.

What to do in such a situation?

The Steelworkers, in a letter by District 6 Director Stewart Cooke, appealed to the Canadian government to take action against the Oshawa shutdown. "It is time to make employers open their books, justify layoffs, retrain people instead of disposing of them, or find them new jobs before exterminating their old ones."

But the Fittings Limited owners have decided that they have no interest whatever in their old employ-

ees, let alone in training others in the Oshawa area. They have closed down everything including their books, and pulled out beyond the jurisdiction of Canadian institutions—the union, and the government too, even if it were prepared to take some kind of drastic action. The minister of labor reported that after two meetings, company officials declared that their decision to close was irrevocable. As an institution for profit making in a "free enterprise" capitalist economy they decided to close up and pull out regardless of other consequences, thereby rendering Steel Director Cooke's propositions inoperative.

In the face of what the leaders of the now defunct St. Kitts UAW local scored as a "callous and irresponsible action on the part of a foreign corporation" the Canadian UAW leadership has appealed to Ottawa to impose stiffer tariffs on Columbus McKinnon products—on the hoists and chains that will be warehoused by a Canadian skeleton staff for sale to companies here. While it is highly doubtful, should continentalist Ottawa make a volte face and implement higher tariffs, that a Canadian-owned industry would spring up—what Canadian capitalist would not take advantage of the tariff to pass the costs along in higher prices on the goods ultimately paid for by Canadian consumers? Meanwhile the St. Kitts plant is idle, its equipment deteriorating or being dispersed and its labor force unemployed and scattering.

The continuing world-wide capitalist recession is having a brutal impact on the branch plant economy that capitalism has spawned in Canada. Its "privileged" position as an appendage of the powerful industrial plant of the U.S. corporate elite, based on resources extraction to feed that plant which is now itself in difficult circumstances, is revealing its all too negative aspects—its character as a semi-developed dependency with whole segments

continued on Page 2

Stop U.S. branch plant closures!

continued from page 1

disposable when they no longer serve U.S. corporate interests.

The capitalists can write off a plant but workers cannot allow themselves to be written off. The St. Kitts auto-workers local leaders protested: "the action points to the necessity of buying back Canada for the interests of Canadian people and Canadian workers."

The plants remain. The skilled

work force is not yet dispersed. The Auto and Steelworkers leaderships proposals will do nothing to meet the situation. The union movement and the NDP must launch a drive to force the government to allocate public funds to defend the jobs of the Oshawa and St. Kitts workers—not in unemployment insurance or welfare payments but by taking over the closed plants under public ownership and retooling them to produce goods

needed in the community. We would propose that, if the companies are to be given anything, that they be paid to the amount that they are writing the plant off at, less any and all grants and subsidies that they have ever received. We would further propose that the plants be placed under the control of the workers who had previously run them.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 12, 1979

FROM OUR GROWING
NUMBER OF SUPPORTERS*

An RCMP agent planted in the Quebec homologue of the League for Socialist Action (La Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière) in the early '70's, presumably to get the goods as to its allegedly "subversive" character became convinced on the basis of his own experience that that organization was in no way "subversive". according to information forwarded to day to the McDonald Commission which is in the process of examining solicitors-general and their relations with the RCMP

RCMP officials have justified their investigation of the sexual orientation of civil servants and others on the grounds that homosexuals would be subject to and vulnerable to blackmail by enemies of the state. Ironically the RCMP itself blackmailed the Montreal citizen into infiltrating the LSA/LSO with the threat that it would inform his employer that he was a homosexual

Harry Kopyto, lawyer for Toronto Socialist Ross Dowson has forwarded the relevant information along with two more letters surreptitiously circulated in that organization. Several letters submitted by Dowson to the Krever Commission on the security of health records were finally admitted by the RCMP this month to have been drawn up and circulated by them in their campaign of dirty tricks against the alleged subversive organization. The letters appear to put the RCMP in violation of the Criminal Code and Mr. Kopyto has urged the Ontario attorney-general to investigate them and to launch appropriate action against the RCMP

Dowson, who was the leading spokesperson of the LSA during the relevant period launched a 1/2 million dollar slander suit against the RCMP following an RCMP report through Attorney-General McMurtry to the Ontario house 16 months ago that it had investigate the NDP and the Waffle but not as such, rather LSAers and ex-Communists in the NDP. Dowson is an active participant in the Toronto area NDP

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Linus Pauling, Benjamin Spock

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Laborers break, join CLC showdown struggle for Cdn union autonomy

by P. Kent

On June 15, following a Montreal meeting of all its business agents in Canada, the 52,000-strong Laborer's International Union broke ranks with the U.S. building trades brass and came over, en bloc, to directly affiliate to the Canadian Labour Congress.

With continued blackmail of the CLC by the U.S.-based leadership of the Building Trades through withholding the Canadian memberships' dues from the congress, the CLC executive had no alternative but to suspend those unions. It did so with the expiration of the deadline that had been set months earlier, on April 30. On the eve of the deadline the U.S. Building Trades brass, from their offices in Washington, with no mandate of any kind from any sector of their Canadian membership and in complete violation of many expressed demands from their members that they turn over to the CLC the dues collected in Canada, issued a declaration of war on the Canadian labor movement.

Over the signature of AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department Executive-secretary James McCamby, they announced the formation of a new Confederation of Labour, in order to provide their roadmen with a Canadian cover. One of their top Canadian stooges, Ken Rose, promptly held out the welcome sign to any other unions that might, for whatever reason, desire to find a cover for their desertion from the CLC, and suggested that the 100,000 Canadian members of the Teamsters Union might be handed over by their Washington brass to help launch the new confederation in high style in October.

The split in the Canadian labor movement is now a simple and hard fact of life. The battle has been joined. It is not a matter of wringing our hands over the rupture of a "unity", that was a fraudulent one in any case. The issue is to win the war, to consolidate labor's ranks on a higher plane that establishes beyond challenge the completely autonomous

character of Canadian unions, no matter what relations they may choose to form with fellow unionists in the U.S. and elsewhere, and that opens the way for the consolidation of labor's ranks so that it can effectively defend and extend labor's interests in struggle against U.S. and Canadian corporate power over Canada.

In acceptance of the Laborer's Union affiliation, the CLC executive agreed to their proposal that efforts continue to be made to resolve the difference with the building trades brass. But of the three issues over which the building trades brass have attempted to justify their split, McDermott dismissed Quebec as a "closed book." Despite the Washington brass' clamping a trusteeship, enforced by a court order, over the 6,000 member Carpenters' local in Montreal, over 60,000 Quebec construction workers commenced to pay their dues through the CLC offices on June 1.

With the defection of the Building Trades, several CLC industrial affiliates moved to win into their own ranks particularly the in-house craft operations, and so keep them in the CLC. While Rose called them "raids", McDermott dismissed such disputes as an inherent part of the situation. The only area open for discussion, McDermott is reported to have said, is that of representation at CLC conventions. The delegates at the last two conventions resoundingly declared their determination to block any tampering with the present democratic structures of representation.

The CLC executive itself delayed and procrastinated several years before coming to grips with the heads of the extremely bureaucratized craft unions at their meetings. Many of them have a poor record on questions of union democracy and in particular Canadian autonomy. McDermott himself, when head of the Auto-workers, imposed the U.S. leadership's compliance with Nixon's wage

freeze on Toronto Douglas Aircraft workers covered by a so-called international contract. Today, while driven in a life and death struggle to draw the line against the building trades brass, they are meeting reluctance and even opposition from sectors which in normal times are a key part of their base.

The CLC has had to threaten to lift the charter of the Saskatchewan Confederation of Labour.

Instructed by the CLC executive to suspend building trades delegates, the BC Federation of Labour executive Council was first lined up "to do everything possible to have the Building Trades remain in the Federation," even by payment of CLC dues to the BC Federation itself. On June 3 the council reversed its position, which will now probably swing the Vancouver and Port Alberni labor councils to suspend Building Trades delegates.

Nonetheless, on June 17 former BC Federation President James Kinnaid headed a committee representing building trades locals across the country seeking to have the CLC amend its formula so as to relieve them from supporting the new CLC provincial trades departments by way of paying dues direct to provincial labor federations. The CLC unanimously drew the line — it rejected the proposal.

This struggle is possibly the most important inner union struggle in Canadian history, comparable to the fight to break the stranglehold of craft unionism and launch the crusade, under the banner of the CIO, to organize North American workers in mass industrial unions. That conflict long pent up in the American Federation of Labor was finally released when John L. Lewis put himself at its head by striking Carpenters' Union head William Hutchison on the jaw at the 1935 AFL convention. That blow resounded up into Oshawa and echoed from Canada's East to West Coast.

The struggle for Canadian trade union autonomy has not yet reached that pitch but it has the possibility,

once given its head, of cutting through alienation and conservatising vested interests to launch Canadian labor onto a higher plane.

But which side are you on?

The *Canadian Tribune* carried a statement of the Central Executive Committee of the Communist Party of Canada which, while supporting the struggle for Canadian autonomy, outlined a program of **Five Constructive Steps**. The CP's policy would couple "the struggle for autonomy with the struggle for unity, fighting off those forces from the right, which denied the need for autonomy, and the forces from some confused elements of the left, the right and the entire ultra-left who chose the pursuit of autonomy through splitting and divisions."

Among its five proposals: it would leave the final resolution of the dispute now in process until the 1982 CLC convention; it would continue negotiations with the building trades; it would allow all building trades locals to remain affiliated to provincial federations and local labor councils which wish to do so; it would allow industrial components of the building trades as well as construction locals to affiliate to the CLC's new building trades set up, and it would have the CLC make a clear and unequivocal statement that no raiding of building trades unions will be tolerated.

This statement was issued April 7 before what was clearly in the cards, the suspension of the building trades from the CLC for its dues blackmailing and its launching of the opposition Canadian Federation of Labour. But this line is still guiding its supporters as at the June 4 Metro Toronto Labour Council meeting.

Dowson case heads to Supreme Court

by Harry Paine

An appeal has been launched by Ross Dowson of the Federal Court of Appeal's dismissal of the only civil action against the RCMP arising out of the shocking revelations concerning their harassment and violation of the civil rights of dissident groups in the 60s and 70s. The latest attempt to block the Dowson case was the unanimous decision handed down on May 26th by the Federal Court of Appeal (composed of Judges Le Dain, Ryan and McKay) which held that the statements complained of were made on an occasion of "absolute privilege", thereby giving their makers immunity from civil liability.

Dowson, through his lawyer Harry Kopyto, immediately announced their intention to apply for leave to appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada this fall. The Socialist Rights Defence Fund has issued a special appeal to raise the funds necessary to see the case through to the Supreme Court. The case has been blocked from the very beginning by RCMP motions seeking to dismiss it. As a result, the

RCMP has been able to avoid answering a variety of embarrassing questions which the McDonald Commission would appear not to have delved into.

Dowson launched his suit in the fall of 1977 when the RCMP and the federal Liberal government slandered the now defunct League for Socialist Action, an organization completely supportive of the NDP of which he was the leader, along with unnamed "ex-communists," as subversive.

The Federal Court ruling held that these statements were being made on behalf of the Minister of Justice. However, lawyer Harry Kopyto, who along with Carl Brand represented Dowson in the hearing last December 9th, said that the ruling not only blocked the case from going to trial but for the first time extended immunity from lawsuits to members of the police force. Previously, such immunity attached only to statements made by government ministers, judges and members of parliament. Kopyto said that arguments

accepted by the court, namely: that the RCMP were acting pursuant to a minister's instructions and that the statement was made on the minister's behalf, could be applied to any employee at any level of government. This decision clothed the entire government apparatus with a royal prerogative more appropriate to the feudal era. If Dowson can be slandered with immunity, anyone anywhere can be slandered with immunity. This decision not only violates the common law as it has developed in other Commonwealth countries such as Australia and England but poses a threat to everyone concerned with public accountability.

As NDP Member of Parliament and Justice critic Svend Robinson stated, if the case is to come to trial, "it will require all of us to unite to see the case through." Contributions should be forwarded to the Socialist Rights Defence Fund, c/o Harry Paine, president, St. David's NDP, 50 Thorncliffe Avenue, Toronto, M4K 1V5.

Court acquits Kopyto

The Supreme Court of Canada rejected an application to appeal the acquittal of human rights lawyer Harry Kopyto on contempt charges June 23rd, thereby ending a seven-month campaign which took on the character of political persecution.

The harassment of this lawyer, who represents Ross Dowson in a half million dollar slander action and who is attempting to get criminal charges laid on Dowson's behalf against RCMP officers who committed serious crimes against Dowson's co-thinkers, had been conducted with the approval of the attorney general for Ontario and the minister of justice in Canada. These same individuals are directly and personally involved in the opposition to the Dowson court action.

The harassment of Kopyto began last December when County Court Judge Hawkins found him in contempt for postponing a serious drug trial on the grounds that he wished to celebrate Hannukah with his family. The Ontario Court of Appeal over-

turned the two dollar fine and cleared Kopyto of the charges after finding that the lawyer had wanted his evenings free to celebrate the holiday.

Kopyto has clashed with Attorney-General McMurtry and Justice Minister Robert Kaplan in the past. He presented evidence to the Keable, McDonald and Krever Commissions concerning RCMP crimes on behalf of Dowson and other politically dissident groups.

Support for Kopyto has been widespread with numerous letters and petitions from lawyers calling for a cessation of his harassment. Members of the Law Union, who sent a telegram protesting his persecution to Attorney-General McMurtry, have appealed for funds to assist in his defence. Contributions towards defraying the legal expenses incurred by Kopyto should be forwarded to the law firm of Pinkofsky, Lockyer and Martin, 439 University Avenue, Suite 1550, Toronto, Ontario.

EDITOR: Wayne Roberts
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12-01-05

Left launched at NDP convention

by the Editors

"I am very glad that this debate took place. I have friends on both sides of the debate... It brought joy to my heart." Ed Broadbent, unanimously re-elected as party leader at the NDP's federal convention in Toronto, heartened the final session of the convention with his thanks to delegates for developing a program which clearly distinguishes the NDP from the indistinguishable Liberals and Tories. He adopted a conciliatory posture to those who had debated on behalf of an even clearer alternative to Liberals and Tories—the alternative of public ownership.

These concluding remarks to the convention represented quite a remarkable shift from the speech he made to a federal council meeting five days earlier. On the eve of the convention, he intervened at federal council to argue in the strongest terms for a convention that would minimize debate and highlight the party's public image of internal stability and moderation.

In the four days that separated these two speeches, 1200 delegates, attending the largest NDP convention ever, discussed and debated the basic problems confronting the party. In the course of those four days, a left caucus emerged with a cross-Canada base in the constituencies, union affiliates and parliamentary caucuses. This left-wing earned the respect of the party by posing challenging new directions and by consolidating the party platform in several key areas.

Of course, that's not the way the media saw it. "NDP convention crushes push by left-wing caucus," headlined the Hamilton Spectator. "The Left-Caucus, it seems, was left standing," claimed a Globe editorial which depicted "Son-of-Waffle... swamped by the bow-wave of a confident party leader, steaming toward the next federal election." According to the Star's Richard Gwynn, "the NDP is getting closer to the centre. All the radical resolutions... were turned down, softened, or shunted aside."

The facts are quite otherwise. In the first place, the initiatives of left delegates were able to overcome leadership inertia and unify the convention behind several important resolutions. This was the case with resolutions in support of postal workers, of Native and Inuit self-determination (a vain effort was made to refer this to an upcoming constitutional committee which would presumably try to settle Inuit and Native rights along the lines of the NDP's Quebec statements) and Petrocan (until the plenary sessions, elements identified with the leadership had tried to evade commitments to expand Petrocan by nationalizing existing firms). In the same vein, the convention united behind a resolution on justice, with a scathing denunciation of the RCMP unlike anything the NDP leadership has yet been identified with, and a broad range of resolutions in support of women's rights. If the left did not have to take the lead on these questions, it is mainly

Left caucus emerges from NDP convention

continued from page 1

because its work has been accomplished over a period of years.

As was to be expected, the left was defeated on the three issues with which it was exclusively identified. The federal council resolution on industrial strategy passed without significant amendment, and the left resolution on public ownership was passed in two panels with a significant, weakening, amendment. The convention, or 60% of it, was unprepared to adopt public ownership as the central strategy and principle of the party.

It should be noted, however, that the federal council resolution it-

self, presented as a "tough and radical" one, represented an adaptation to the left, an attempt to straddle the developing polarization within the party. The federal leadership's statement on industrial strategy adopted last spring made virtually no reference to public ownership. Broadbent argued at the time that the current Liberal mix of private and public enterprise would remain stable "for the foreseeable future," with the exception of Petrocan. He went further and placed himself against public ownership "philosophically... because it would lead to over concentration of state power and a tendency to abuse that power and destroy the notion of freedom, which is at the heart of socialism." By contrast, the federal council resolution on industrial strategy presented at the convention calls for public ownership "where necessary" and in essential resource and manufacturing industries, and points to the vital and positive tradition of public ownership. This represents a modest advance, no doubt due to left-wing protest over the original statements and the pressure of events around Tory privatization efforts, which have vindicated the centrality of public ownership.

The nuclear debate involved the left indirectly, as its forces moved behind the autonomous environment caucus to support a moratorium on uranium mining as well as reactors. The convention upheld a go-ahead on nuclear mining, in keeping with the activities of the Saskatchewan government. Although this represented a defeat for the left caucus, it should be noted that the nuclear debate is a dispute which remains at this time one of scientific judgement rather than clear left-right divisions.

The left suffered its most unqualified defeat on Quebec. A last-minute resolution from federal council called for renewed federalism and appealed to Quebecers to join New Democrats in that enterprise. Efforts to have the NDP make a straightforward statement endorsing Quebec's national rights to self-determination failed by a margin of four to one (see coverage elsewhere in this issue.)

Although differences between left and right were expressed on major policy issues, no formal contests developed for positions of party leadership. Nevertheless Steve Langdon, the leadership's main spokesman on industrial strategy, finished rockbottom of the new federal council delegates, while Cec Taylor, former Waffler and now president of the 12000 Stelco local, came close to defeating Steel brass representative Stew Cook. These developments were purely spontaneous.

The socialist delegates correctly concentrated their attention on policy issues and methods of educating the convention during "floor fights." This in itself was no small achievement for a group which came into the convention without Canada-wide connections or communication channels, let alone common working experiences. With very few exceptions, all left caucus meetings were open and tolerant, and provided time for the expression of different concerns and points of view.

Elements in the caucus also moved toward establishing mechanisms for left delegates to keep in contact, so that we would not always have to decide on complicated questions under the gun of an impending floorfight. Jim Turk, a former provincial party president and the most authoritative representative of the left delegates, articulated the need for such a long-range discussion, and a late Saturday evening meeting endorsed efforts to develop an information and discussion bulletin to be circulated within the party.

As the convention was getting underway, left MP John Rodriguez told the *Globe* that "we lost the cream, the guts, the lifeblood of the party in the departure of the Waffle ... We've been dormant in the last few years... but it's coming back."

Indeed the left is coming back, as it was bound to do. The NDP, as the party incorporating the politically most advanced workers in the country, inevitably becomes the forum for thrashing out political and programmatic proposals for the labor movement, regardless of the efforts of the NDP leadership to dampen these initiatives, and regardless of the absence of those ultralefts who consider the NDP too impure an environment for them.

"The time for waffling is over," declared the editorial in the Nickelbelt **New Democrat** produced for the convention. "The NDP can continue to fall backwards in an effort to appear practical, safe and trustworthy (to whom?) or recommit itself to being a democratic socialist party dedicated to supporting the needs of working people. The economic crisis, the political crisis and the social crisis can only be met with a socialist alternative. For the NDP the time is now."

The left, the only force capable of winning the party to such a perspective, has re-emerged in the party. In the course of the convention it jelled from a group brought together by word of mouth to support a public ownership resolution, to a united group speaking on several issues and openly declaring itself a caucus. It is on the way to firmly establishing itself as a broad and ongoing, though necessarily loose formation. History will show that this was the most significant achievement of the convention.

Court No. A
In The Federal
Appeal Court

BETWEEN:

ROSS
DOWSON
v.
RCMP

A vivid episode
in the ongoing
struggle for
freedom of thought
and social justice
in Canada.

Forward by
CLAYTON RUBY

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AND TO HELP FINANCE ITS EFFORTS

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INTERNATIONAL

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AMONG CANADIAN ORGANIZATIONS: Brampton and District Labour Council; Campbell River, Courtenay & District Labour Council; Kamloops and District Labour Council; Kenora-Keweenaw District Labour Council; Metro Toronto Labour Council; Nelson-Trail & District Labour Council; St. John District Labour Council; Vancouver & District Labour Council; Victoria Labour Council; Canadian Union of Public Employees, Niagara District Council; Lumber & Sawmill Workers Union, Local 2693, Thunder Bay; United Auto Workers Local 303, Scarborough; United Auto Workers Amalgamated Local 28, Toronto; 10th Federal Convention of the New Democratic Party, New Brunswick NDP; Vancouver-Little Mountain NDP; Marxist-Leninist Organization of Canada in Struggle; Law Union of Ontario 1979 Conference.

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*Organizations listed for identification only

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

We wish to indicate our support as concerned civil libertarians for the suit initiated by Mr. Ross Dowson, against the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. We understand that the purpose of this suit is to establish the legitimacy and legality of socialist thought in face of charges of "subversion" by the RCMP.

We believe that individuals have the right to express their views free of unwarranted and unsubstantiated allegations of subversion.

We believe that the charge of subversion has been used and is being used to justify intervention in the internal affairs and the harassment of such legal organizations as the New Democratic Party and the organized labor movement and we further believe that such activities threaten to whittle away at the democratic right to dissent in Canada.

Though we may not necessarily agree with the political views of Mr. Dowson, we do believe that the real test of a democracy is its ability to tolerate and respect individuals whose views may not coincide with those of the majority at any given time.

We are ticking off the appropriate box(es).

Add my name to the list of supporters
 Enclosed please find a contribution to the fund to help pay the legal costs.

Signature _____

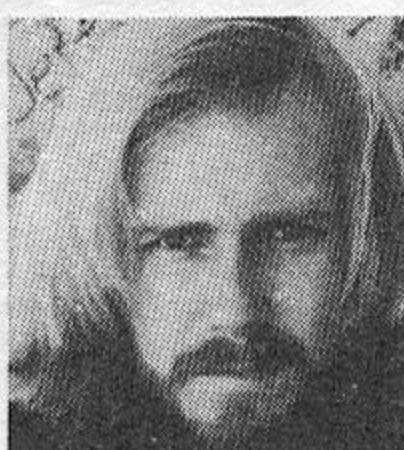
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Return this statement as soon as possible to the Socialist Rights Defence Fund, Christine Judge, administrative secretary, Harry Paine [president of St. David's NDP], treasurer, 50 Thorncliffe Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M4K 1V5.



Joe Rosenblatt



Peter McLaren



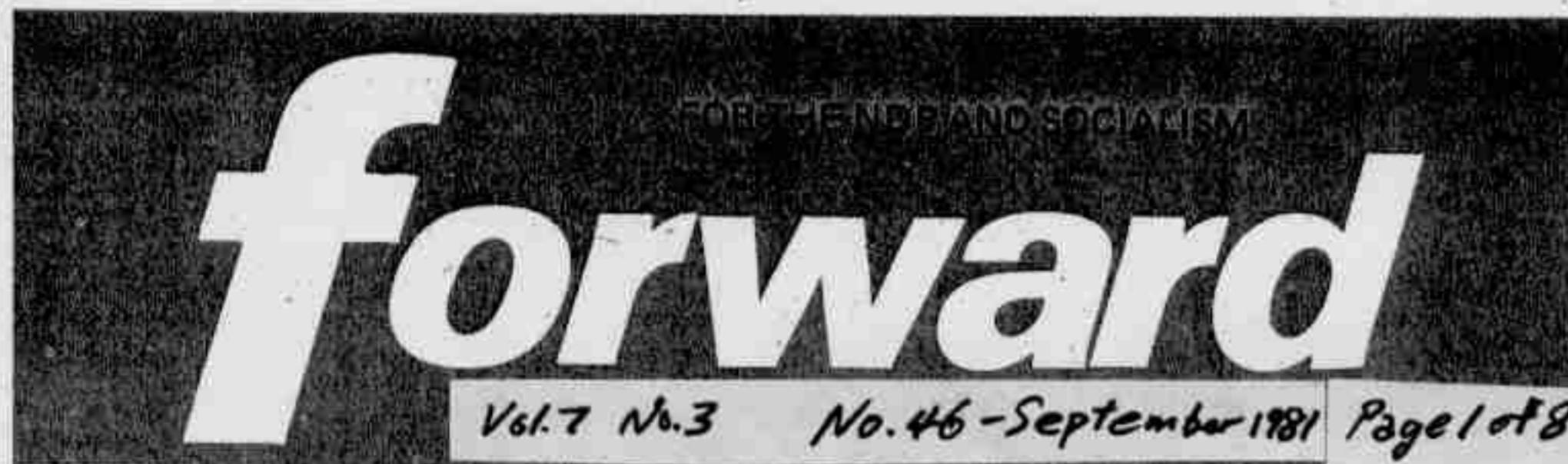
Mike Lyons

Inside Poland today

Program of Solidarity

For Workers Control

For Socialist Democracy



Program of the Polish trade union – Solidarity

I. Basic Values

Our union was formed barely half a year ago as a result of the struggle of the workers, supported by the whole country. Today we are a powerful social force, encompassing millions of members. Thanks to this, all working people in Poland can at last advance their common aims with dignity and effectiveness. We were born out of the protest against injustice, humiliation, and abuse. We are an independent and self-governing union of working people of all regions and occupations. We defend the rights, dignity, and interests of all workers.

We want to peacefully shape the life of our country in accordance with patriotic ideals, social justice, and democratic rights. As a trade union, we do not aim to replace the government in performing its tasks, but we do want to represent the interests of working people in relation to the state. We will thus defend the rights of the individual, the citizen, and the worker. At the same time, we do not shirk our responsibility for the destiny of our people and country.

1. The best national traditions, the ethical principles of Christianity, the political banner of democracy, and the social thought of socialism — these are the four main sources of our inspiration.

We feel a deep attachment to the entire legacy of Polish culture, which is rooted in European culture, with a strong tie to Catholicism, but also with links to quite varied religious and philosophical traditions. We feel a very close bond with the generations of Poles who have struggled for national liberation and social justice. They have left us a tradition of openmindedness and brotherhood, of civic responsibility for the Polish Republic and of support for equality before the law. Therefore, we have room for everyone, regardless of philosophy, nationality, or political conviction.

2. The idea that working people should join together means that we rate very highly the values that grow out of collective action. These include solidarity — after which we have named our union — comradeship, the capacity for sacrifice, and the willingness to contribute for the benefit of the union and for the broader interests of society as well. Finally, one of the values must be the idea of brotherhood among working people in a common front against the exploiters, regardless of the banners and slogans under which their exploitation is masked.

3. Our basic task — the defense of working people — is based on the principle of observing social justice. We shall strive to have this principle recognized as the basis for all state activities. We want it to become the foundation of all solutions in the domains of social policy and the organization of collective life.

To us, social justice is based on the inherent integrity of the individual, the dignity of the worker and his labor. We want the principle of the dignity of the individual to

permeate the entire life of our union and to be the basic building stone of a new society.

From the principles of social justice and the dignity of the individual, it follows that all people are basically equal. We shall therefore press for the realization of egalitarianism in society.

We recognize the principle that wages depend on the quantity and quality of labor, as well as the difficulty and hazards of the job ("to each according to their work").

Continued on page 2



Anna Walentynowicz, whose firing precipitated Gdansk Shipyard strike, addressing rally.

A crucial document

By the Editors

The editors of **Forward** are devoting this entire issue to the publication of the complete text of the program of the independent Polish trade union movement, Solidarity. This document first appeared in the April issue of *Tygodnik Solidarnosc* (Solidarity Weekly), the third issue of the union's national newspaper.

It was drawn up for circulation and discussion by the union's more than ten million members, about 90% of the working class, in preparation for the first national congress of the union which assembled early this month in Gdansk. It was the strike of the Gdansk shipyard workers which just one year ago ignited a series of massive struggles which swept across the country forcing the Polish Communist Party government to recognize that Solidarity had in effect pushed aside and replaced its official trade union machinery to become the authentic voice of the Polish working class.

As Solidarity leader Lech Walesa said to an International Labour Organization meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, on June 5, "Our union was born out of protest. Using the traditional methods of workers' struggle — demonstrations and strikes — it contributed in a definitive way to launching a profound transformation of the social and political life of the country. There is no area which has remained unaffected by this process of renewal."

"Even though we are aware this is only the beginning of these changes, no one in Poland has any doubt as to the fact that there is no way back to the previous methods of ruling the country and governing its economy."

Solidarity, he said, "has become the greatest, the largest social organization in the history of my country. Its members... are joined by one common striving... life in civic freedom, in freedom of thought and speech, in human dignity, and national sovereignty..."

The Polish upsurge focussed through Solidarity is so profound that the chief instrument of the privileged Polish state bureaucracy, the Communist Party of Poland,

at its recent congress was compelled to respond by making major political, social and economic concessions. One million of Solidarity's members hold cross-membership in the CP. For the first time, a Stalinist party in state power was compelled to hold direct and secret elections of delegates and a secret ballot in the elections for membership in its highest bodies — which resulted in the election of a Solidarity leader to its political bureau.

Caught between the demands of the Soviet bureaucracy, which appears to have pulled back from its threat of armed invasion, but which continues to smear the Polish movement as "counter-revolutionary", and the struggle directed against it and undermining its base, the Polish CP bureaucracy is being compelled to follow a policy of concessions and collaboration with Solidarity as the only possible alternative.

With the publication of this program and the discussion it is stimulating throughout Poland, Solidarity is preparing the masses there to face the challenges ahead — above all by moving in the direction of the establishment of a genuine workers democracy controlling and developing the nationalized property relations that prevail in the strategic industrial sectors of the economy.

As a document of the Polish workers' struggle it clarifies such questions as the role of religion, the Catholic Church, and of Polish nationalism. It clearly defines as the primary cause and the sharp exacerbation of the current economic crisis, not only bureaucratic privilege and inefficiency, but above all the barring of working class innovation and initiative from the economic decision making processes in society. Its demand for workers control and self-management defines the Polish struggle as being fundamentally for socialist democracy.

Canadian readers, besides examining the authentic views of the Polish working class movement on the problems confronting them and their solutions, can gain from the Solidarity program a heightened insight into the challenges looming before them in their own struggle for socialist democracy.

Importance of Solidarity to the Canadian struggle

By Ross Dowson

The struggle of the Polish workers under the banner of Solidarity transcends by far the borders of Poland.

Their aim, as declared in the draft program reproduced in these pages is to establish their direct control over the Polish economy through self-management bodies. Through the elimination of the bureaucrats who put their own personal interests and material privileges before the interests of the working people, they aim to release and bring into full play the knowledge, and the innovative skills of the workers on the job — to bring into being a co-operative commonwealth of labor.

It is through breaking out and initiating the establishment in real life of a genuine socialist democracy, through the democratization of all spheres of social, political and economic life in their country, that the Polish workers see the way out of the decline of production in the nationally-owned industrial sectors, the neglect of agriculture, and the burdensome national debt accumulated through the squandering of foreign loans in wasteful investments into which the mismanagement of the bureaucracy has sunk them.

By raising the banner of socialist democracy, the Polish workers have given their struggle the most profound significance for the international working class movement.

The Polish working class, its ranks united in Solidarity, within one short year of existence, has launched a process which promises to sweep away the decades of debasement and desecration that has been smeared over the liberatory banner of socialism, not only by the capitalist class enemy, but by those who proclaim themselves to be its official spokesmen and its most fervent partisans.

The Russian Revolution, as a beacon pointing the way to peace and human freedom, gave a mighty impulse to the struggle for socialism on a world scale. But the subsequent isolation of the USSR and its degeneration at the hands of a self-seeking bureaucracy, headed by Stalin, which brutally crushed every democratic right enshrined in its constitution and ruthlessly framed up and murdered Lenin and Trotsky's co-workers and countless thousands more, transformed it. It became a symbol particularly in the eyes of the workers in the capitalist West, of brutal totalitarian rule. The declared democratic aims of socialism were seen as a trick of despicable hypocrites, if not a delusion of cretins.

Subsequent generations of socialists everywhere have been paying a heavy price for the crimes of Stalin and his heirs. But now, once more, thanks to the heroic struggle of the Polish workers this crushing incubus is being removed and the great liberating, egalitarian and profoundly democratic aims of socialism are being once again unfurled from a citadel of the international working class movement — for all to see.

The high aim, the purity of their objective, instead of causing divisions in their ranks, has resulted in an increasingly powerful unity of the Polish people and an awesome determination to struggle against seemingly impossible odds with whatever resource at hand, and to win. Their proclamation that, not dictated by self-proclaimed leaders and their bureaucratic sycophants, but workers' control and self-management is the way forward to socialism will surely result in a clarification and purification of working class ranks and lead to a revival of a truly principled, dynamic and liberatory united socialist movement completely worthy of a selfless commitment by the most far-seeing elements of the working class.

The Polish example is of the utmost immediacy to the workers in all the post-capitalist states. The workers in the Soviet Union, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Albania, China, Vietnam, etc., with only differences in degree, are deprived of the most elementary rights of participation in the decision-making process of societies that claim to function entirely in their interests. There is no doubt that, as information on what's happening in Poland filters through, it will have a profound effect, particularly on the youth of those countries.

The privileged bureaucrats who have politically expropriated the workers in their own domain, know better than anybody that this struggle, as previous ones in Poland, East Germany, Hungary and Czechoslovakia, is not directed to the restoration of capitalism but to the fulfilment of the promises of socialist democracy. It is a deadly fear that the Polish events will be seen by the workers of the USSR and even more immediately by other sectors in Eastern Europe as something to emulate that causes Brezhnev and apologists to smear the struggle as counter-revolutionary. This is what lies behind their persistent threats of armed invasion and bloody suppression even though they play into the hands of the most rabidly reactionary forces in the capitalist world.

But while the lessons of the developing Polish events may be more readily drawn by the workers in those states that have been wrenching out of the capitalist orbit and cynically labelled socialist by their governing cliques and their international acolytes — as if there could be a socialism with neither political nor industrial (economic)

democracy — the Polish example has profound importance for the working class everywhere.

Despite the higher combativity of the workers and impoverished peasants in the so-called Third World locked today in heroic struggle in Nicaragua and El Salvador, it is above all the assimilation of the lessons of Poland by the workers of Europe and North America, lodged in the centres of capitalist power, that can fundamentally re-align and build the forces for socialism on a world-wide scale.

The mightiest battalions of working class power are in Europe. The working class there have forged massive trade unions and political parties of their own through which, time and time again since before imperialist World War I, they have demonstrated their total rejection of capitalism. But despite a series of critical opportunities, due to a profound crisis of leadership (Stalinist subjection of the workers' cause to the conjunctural maneuvers of the Soviet bureaucracy and reformist adaptation to bourgeois illusions) the socialist breakthrough was blocked and the horrors of the Second Imperialist World War unleashed.

Once again we are witness, under the pressures of the deepening crisis of the world-wide capitalist economy, to a new developing radicalization. Responding to it, the French Socialist Party leadership for the first time has been thrust into political power by a working class with high expectations. The British workers too, as Thatcher's Reganomics attempt to impose the costs of the capitalist decay on their backs, are stirring. However, this time, not the Gaitskell's and Callaghan's, the socialist left, headed by Benn, is on the ascendancy in the struggle to make the British Labour Party deliver on its promise.

But everywhere, including Canada, substantial layers of the working class, scarred and frustrated by the betrayals of the official leadership, some of them, the most experienced and sophisticated, have become alienated, have opted out and as observers are standing on the sidelines. The old fires must be rekindled. They must be won back to fuse their knowledge to the high anticipations of the new idealistic forces coming into the struggle. The Polish workers under the banner of Solidarity are setting a peerless example, for above all, their struggle is addressed to socialist renewal. Beset by excruciating difficulties on all sides, they have grasped the socialist banner from out of the mud of procrastination and compromise and raised it once again, pristine, as it was in 1848 when the young Marx and Engels issued the call — Let the ruling class tremble, the proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Workers of all countries unite!

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"Dowson v. RCMP"

"...with the release of the McDonald Commission report on the RCMP 'dirty tricks' Dowson's case has suddenly become a cause célèbre. As the only action in progress against the RCMP's own subversion of civil rights it has become the focal point of protest." A. McColl, editor of *The Peak*, S.F.U.
"I haven't heard such enlightening discussion of Marxism for perhaps twenty-five, thirty years." — Justice Krever on Dowson's testimony before his commission.

"I read it with considerable interest and appreciation. It makes a needed contribution — I say this without agreeing with your basic political platform." John Sawatsky, author of *Men In The Shadows* (Doubleday \$15)

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Jacek Kuron

The following is a part of an interview that ICP correspondents had in Warsaw on May 2 with Jacek Kuron, a prominent figure in Solidarity. Kuron, with Karol Modzelewski, in 1965 authored an Open Letter on the Polish situation which was widely circulated in the European and American Left.

Question. Could you give your assessment of the present situation in Poland?

...I call it a revolution because, practically speaking, it is a movement involving all of Polish society, which is trying to change its life as a whole. I would say it is based on a revolution in people's moral outlook. People have decided that it is impossible to go on living as they used to. There is a general conviction that the way of life we were forced into was opposed to all basic human values, and the attempt to change our way of life in every aspect stems from that general conviction. This change of outlook, which I call a moral revolution, affects all human relationships — social, political, and all others...

This movement is found in every possible sphere of life — in factory relationships, in the area of workers self-management, in parliament, in town councils, in culture and education, schools, theater, literature, the system of orphanages — every sphere of life. And that is why I call it a revolution. And this change is occurring very rapidly...

And now we have to consider the complexities of the situation. I think that the basic thing that complicates the situation is the fact of Soviet domination of Poland. There is a general awareness of the fact that one day the tanks may appear, and then the Polish war would start, which would be a tragedy for our nation. This has to be avoided. At the same time, this revolution cannot be stopped, because nobody could ever stop a revolution.

I wrote an article on whether there would be a Soviet intervention, in which I had an idea on what has to be done in connection with this. The article was circulated widely, and we are still considering the same question. Now I would like to clarify this. The premises for this concept — of how to avoid intervention are as follows. The Soviet Union requires a political guarantee of its military domination over Poland. That is the necessary minimum, from their point of view.

I thought the statement in the Gdansk agreement which acknowledged the leading role of the party would be this necessary guarantee. It had to be connected with a strict definition of what the political leading role of the party meant...

This entire program has fallen to pieces, because a revolution has started in the party. Because this whole line of thinking was based on the assumption of the Soviet Union's trust in the party. And in the present situation I am afraid this trust is no longer possible.

Because of the external danger, the revolution has to be self-limited. At the beginning nobody knew whether the self-limitation of the revolution was possible. Generally speaking, revolutions are not able to limit themselves. However, in my opinion, it was within our power. I think perhaps we could have done it. The self-limitation of the revolution might have been possible. But now we don't know the answer to the basic question of how to do that.

This revolution has reached the party and now it is proceeding inside the party. And I don't know yet what should be done in this situation...



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EDITOR: Wayne Roberts

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09-01-21

Canadian union autonomy issue heats up in BC

by Paul Kane

The BC Labour Relations Board has declared that the small Canadian Association of Industrial Mechanical and Allied Workers (CAIMAW) has filed membership cards for the majority of the 4,851 workers at Cominco Limited mining and smelting operations in Trail and Kimberley. If the cards are ruled to be valid, despite an almost certain challenge by the giant United Steelworkers of America, a struggle for certification will be joined this spring.

The rise of Canadian national unionism over the past decade has resulted in the membership of the so-called internationals becoming for the first time a minority in the Canadian Labour Congress. It has also resulted in continuing mounting pressure for Canadian trade union autonomy that have forced their U.S. office holders into conceding varying measures of autonomy to their Canadian affiliates.

But this process of reform from within has been too slow and on an altogether too piecemeal basis, depriving the concessions of any real

perspective of opening the unions to genuine democratic rank-and-file control, in the opinion of some militants. A growing number of them has been looking to forces outside the CLC and actually becoming members of the Confederation of Canadian Unions to which CAIMAW is affiliated.

CAIMAW already has a small but important base in BC in its own 5,500 members and in its sister union, the Canadian Association of Smelter and Allied Workers (CASAW). The latter got underway when Alcan workers in Kitimat switched over from the Steelworkers in 1972. Steel faces a very unstable situation in Cominco—the site of a long wearing struggle against Mine Mill, until the latter union fused with Steel, and again in 1973 when CAIMAW missed out on certification on legal technicalities. The last contract was accepted by a narrow vote of only 50.8% and then only with the support of the office staff. The Steel leadership, and not only Len Stevens in the West, has been losing credibility. Stewart Cooke, its Eastern leader, was routed out of office this spring by Sudbury local president Dave Patterson, but no before he and his staff managed to compromise Hamilton Local 1005's struggle with Stelco by settling Stelco's finishing plants and approving a weak Algoma settlement.

Steel will wage a no-holds-barred battle against CAIMAW because the loss of Cominco would cut its BC membership in half and would further jeopardize hopes that former Canadian leader Lynn Williams, now international secretary treasurer, may have for the Steelworkers presidency. With the addition of the Cominco workers to its ranks, not only CAIMAW, but the Confederation of Canadian Unions would get a powerful boost forward.

For some months now Local 1 CASAW, representing the Alcan workers in Kitimat has been studying the possibility of merger with the Fédération des Syndicats du Secteur

Aluminum, representing about 6,000 Alcan employees in Quebec. The CCU has also been making some headway among rail workers who are widely discontented with their ossified U.S. leadership. Early last year CN and CP rail traffic controllers broke from their internationals to form the Rail Canada Traffic Controllers. The union representing the majority of the BC Rail Workers who have just signed a break-through contract is the CCU affiliate, the Canadian Union of Transportation Employees (CUTE).

CUTE is helping promote a Shopcraft Organizing Committee (SOC) which from its Vancouver base has initiated a campaign to replace the eight existing 21,000-member U.S.-based shop-craft unions with a single militant Canadian organization. The CN bosses' recent decision to end a 60-year tradition of signing a common contract with CP for all shop-craft employees has shaken up the U.S.-based bureaucrats and forced their Canadian mouthpieces to talk in heretofore unheard of militancy and in terms of Canadian autonomy. A resolution passed unanimously at the CN Joint Protective Board mini-convention in Ottawa last August called for ending affiliation with the U.S. office-dominated union "through negotiations if possible and if this is not possible then by unilateral action."

However when Mimico Lodge No. 110 CN Carmen decided to implement that decision by ceasing to pay dues they were threatened with trusteeship. Top officers of the American Carmen's Union told three Canadian officers that they had no intention of negotiating any of the changes that the Canadian convention delegates had demanded. With the stall of negotiations which commenced last October the Canadian Council, under the pressure of rank and filers, including the Shop-craft Organizing Committee, is asking Ottawa to appoint a conciliator, the first legal step toward any eventual strike action.

Profane day of labor unity over Poland's Solidarnosc

by Jean Laplante

This year, May Day rallies and demonstrations were held in the major cities across the country. The massive response to the great success of the Cruise missile protests a week earlier which saw an estimated 22,000 at Toronto's City Hall square, and deep concern in labor's ranks about mounting unemployment, added to the growing involvement of the trade union movement in May Day actions in recent years, assured their success.

The Toronto plans were for a rally at Queen's Park and a march to the Ukrainian Labour Temple meeting with featured speakers Wally Majeski, president of the Metro Toronto Labour Council, Sean O'Flynn, president of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union, Dan Heap, NDP MP Spadina and Communist Party of Canada Labour Secretary William Stewart. But it took an unexpected turn. The following day over the name of its president the Metro Toronto Labour Council issued a formal press release (see elsewhere on this page). The circumstances that lead to this sharp statement were as follows:

Leading Toronto Solidarity Support activist Stephen Dankowich, also involved in the Toronto Unemployed Workers Union, which is listed as one of the sponsors of the May Day action, contacted one of the officials with regards to TSSC participation. He was informed of the date of the next organizing meeting and asked to submit a 40-50 word greeting for publication in the program notes. This was submitted and apparently readily accepted for publication. However when three Solidarity Support activists appeared at the meeting the chair ruled that their organization was of no consequence, barred them from participation, and even from uttering a word of protest to the handful in attendance. The following meeting of the Unemployed Workers Union which is endorsed along with the Solidarity Support

Committee by the Metro Labour Council, passed a motion protesting the barring of the Solidarity Committee from the May Day Committee.

As news was coming in of the Jaruzelski regime's brutal attack on Solidarity supporter demonstrations in major Polish cities, Toronto Solidarity support activists and friends, including some of the Unemployed Workers Union, appeared with their banner at the Toronto rallying point to protest their exclusions with some hurriedly prepared signs reading: Workers of the World Unite means behind the Polish workers too, and, May Day Cannot be Silent on Polish Workers Suppression. They were quickly ringed off on the edge of the main body by parade marshalls under the direction of well-known members of the Communist Party who had filled many of the official posts.

The police, who had been approached by the marshalls, informed the Solidarity support forces that they would not be allowed to join the parade nor even come up in the rear on the street since, unlike the parade

from which they had been barred, they had no permit. The police conceded that they could not stop them from marching on the sidewalk as long as there was no disturbance.

As the parade moved off, the 40 to 50 Solidarity supporters were threatened by a pushing and shoving mobilization of marshalls. As it moved onto the streets the marshalls formed an arm-in-arm line separating the demonstrators on the street from those on the sidewalk who they loudly baited as Reganites and CIA agents. Both forces shouted the slogans in support of the anti-imperialist struggles in Nicaragua and El Salvador, opposition to the arms drive and, for jobs, in complete unison. As the parade approached the meeting place the Solidarity supporters moved off so that there could be no excuse for a hassle.

That evening's extended CBC coverage concentrated on shots and comments on the CP's disruption of a demonstration dedicated to labor's unity against their oppressors. It ended with an interview with the president of the labour council along the lines of the press release.

Denounced by Labour Council

There has been some controversy surrounding the support of "Solidarity" by the Canadian Trade Union movement arising out of yesterday's May Day activities in Metro Toronto.

For the record, the Labour Movement in Metropolitan Toronto supports the Polish Solidarity Trade Union movement. And secondly, recognizes and supports the Metro Toronto Committee in Support of Solidarity.

Regarding the whole question of whether Solidarity supporters should have been excluded or barred from marching in the May Day parade, our position is quite

clear and unequivocal. We do not think anybody should be excluded from either marching, or in fact celebrating, May Day — either now or in the future.

Secondly, May Day is an international day of celebrating support for working people around the world, and should this ever happen again in future, the Labour Council wouldn't, under any circumstances, participate in an activity which precludes or bars any group, regardless of their political affiliation.

Wally Majesky, President
Metro Toronto Labour Council
May 2, 1983

06-07-14

Labor key factor in Canadian protest behind Polish Solidarity

The broad popular protest against the outlawing of the Polish independent democratic trade union Solidarnosc and the frame-up trials planned by the military regime headed by General Jaruzelski against 13 Solidarity activists, 6 of them former leaders of KOR (Workers Defence Committee) has been joined by an Open Letter addressed to the Polish Ambassador to Canada. The letter, published in the May issue of **Canadian Dimension and Labour Focus** is signed by 41 persons, some of whom endorsed the Solidarity Support Committee appeal. But in addition it adds the voices of Jean-Claude Parrot, president of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, Earl McCurdy, secretary-treasurer of the Newfoundland Fishermen, Gil Levine, research director of CUPE, Madeline Parent, Eastern vice-president of the Council of Canadian Unions, and Cec Taylor, president of Hamilton Steelworkers Local 1005.

The Solidarity Support Committee statement was initiated by some 21 persons including Canadian Labour Congress President Dennis McDermott, author Margaret Atwood, CUPE President Grace Hartman, lawyer Clayton Ruby, and literary critic H. Northrop Frye. It called for the dropping of the charges, the release of the prisoners and an end to harassment in the exercise of their democratic rights. It was placed in

Saturday March 5 weekend national edition of the **GLOBE AND MAIL**, inviting signatures and donations to finance the ad from the public at large. It won a very broad support ranging from Progressive Conservative party leader the Hon. John C. Crosbie, head of the Canadian Jewish Congress Irwin Cotler, Toronto's Liberal Mayor Eggleton, Canadian Polish Congress President Jan Kasuba, top officers of nearly every labor council in the country, the Ontario NDP parliamentary Caucus, and scores of persons from every

walk of Canadian life.

The signers of the Open Letter specifically identified themselves as opponents of "the massive repression and even murder of trade union and socialist forces by capitalist regimes in Latin America and South Africa" and "the suspension of trade union rights currently taking place in Canada." They also defended the Polish accused's "right to advocate a democratic self-managed state" as a position which is "an integral part of any meaningful socialism."

Reproduced below is an appeal that was placed in the national edition of the **Toronto GLOBE & MAIL** by the Solidarity Support Committee of Toronto. The statement of the initiating sponsors won an immediate response from scores of organizations and individuals from a wide spectrum of public opinion, reflecting the grave concern of Canadians about developments in Poland.

Stop the Show-Trials in Poland!

A new phase of repression is about to begin in Poland. Not content with outlawing the independent democratic trade union Solidarity or with effectively suppressing all other traditional means of dissent, the military regime headed by General Jaruzelski is now set to stage a series of show trials against thirteen leading Solidarity activists on charges of conspiracy and sedition. If found guilty — and the official press already berates them as such — the accused face a maximum penalty of death.

The accused are: Adam Michnik, Jacek Kuron, Jan Litwinski, Henryk Wujec, Jan Jozef Lipski, Miroslaw Chojnicki (in Paris and charged in absentia), Andrzej Gwiazda, Karol Modzelewski, Jan Rulewski, Seweryn Jaworski, Grzegorz Palka, Marian Jurczyk, and Andrzej Rozplochowski. The first six have been advisors to Solidarity and were former leaders of KOR (Workers' Defence Committee, formed to assist workers victimized in the 1976 strikes). The seven others are top Solidarity representatives.

"Everything points to a judicial farce along the lines of the Moscow Trials or the trial of Dimitrov, accused of having burned the Reichstag." So stated defendant Adam Michnik in his "Open Letter to the International Community" appealing for support.

Michnik's paralleling of the coming trials with the infamous frame-up trials staged by Stalin and with those staged by Hitler during the thirties is valid. Their aim is the same: to serve up scapegoats for the regime's own crimes against the people of Poland.

The accusations themselves, moreover, are patent fabrications.

At no time have any of the defendants advocated terrorism. They have repeatedly called for peaceful change and the democratization of public and working life through negotiations based on respect for the 1980 Gdańsk Accords signed by the government. It is the state authorities

who have sabotaged this peaceful and legitimate process. It is they who have used terror and violence against an unarmed populace.

Worldwide public opinion must not allow this monstrous political frame-up to go unchallenged. If carried out, these trials and threatened executions may be a prelude to similar measures against the thousands who are still being held in prison and others who continue to resist the repressive actions of the authorities.

We appeal to the Polish authorities:

- 1) immediately drop all charges against the accused;
- 2) immediately release them from custody;
- 3) halt all further harassment of them in exercising their legitimate rights of speech, publication and association;

AND FURTHER,

We appeal that, should the authorities persist in their present course, they grant the accused open trials held in full view of the world, and they grant representatives of properly constituted bodies of international labour and legal opinion, status before the Polish courts to monitor these trials and to participate in the defence of the accused.

INITIATING ENDORSERS: BROMLEY ARMSTRONG, former Canadian Human Rights Commissioner; GREGORY BAUM, author; GREGORY BAUM, author; PIERRE BERTON, author; JUNE CALLWOOD, journalist; PAUL COPELAND, lawyer; DR. J. K. FEDOROWICZ, historian; DR. H. NORTHRUP FRYE, University professor and Literary Critic; CY GONICK of Canadian Dimension; JEREMY HORNER, author; TONY LEWIS, author of political science; Carleton University; JOHN HARKER, international affairs director, Canadian Labour Congress; GRACE HARTMAN, president, Canadian Union of Public Employees; HARRY KOPYTO, lawyer; DENNIS McDERMOTT, president, Canadian Labour Congress; DR. PATRICK MCNAUL, director of the United Kingdom office of the Norman Penner, professor of political science, York University; STAN PERSKY, author; CLAYTON C. RUBY, lawyer; GORDON SKILLING, professor of political science, University of Toronto; JOSEF SKVORECKY, author; MEL WATKINS, professor of economics, University of Toronto.

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I wish to be one of the signatories of the appeal.

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Draft Manifesto for the NDP Submitted by the Ontario Left Caucus

March 1983

Preamble

Fifty years ago, the founders of our movement gathered in Regina and proclaimed their dedication to a Cooperative Commonwealth. In ringing terms, they set out their alternative to the grinding poverty, stark injustice and stormclouds of war that confronted their generation:

"We aim to replace the present capitalist system, with its inherent injustice and inhumanity, by a social order from which the domination and exploitation of one class by another will be eliminated, in which economic planning will supersede unregulated private enterprise and competition, and in which genuine democratic self-government, based on economic equality, will be possible."

Today, despite all the vows that a social crisis like the Depression of the 1930's would never happen again, the world is in the grips of an even more dangerous social, economic and political crisis. Mass unemployment is already a reality. Labour rights, our whole range of health and social services, are under fierce attack. Humanity itself is threatened with destruction from the nuclear war drive fuelled by international militarism. Never have we stood in greater need of fundamental solutions.

The Liberals and Conservatives offer nothing but wait-and-see platitudes and policies that punish the population for the crimes of an economic system. Only the NDP offers a way out. In this era, socialism promises more than an ideal. It promises to be the only answer to the pressing challenges before us.

The NDP (*New Democratic Party, founded in 1961*), like the CCF before it (*Cooperative Commonwealth Federation, precursor to the NDP, founded in 1932*), is itself the creation and inheritance of the struggles of successive generations of workers and farmers, who realized that their aspirations for a humane society could never be met within the framework of a capitalist Canada. In contrast to the Liberals and Conservatives who are the parties of the major corporations and vested interests, the NDP remains the party of working people and their allies.

Our goal is a socialist Canada, a new social order based on common ownership of our resources and industry, cooperation, production for use and genuine democracy. Only socialism can turn the boundless potential of our people and resources to the creation of a world free from tyranny, greed, poverty and exploitation.

The World Economic Crisis

Canadians live and work in a world dominated by multinational corporate monopolies. These farflung business empires, of a scope and size unimaginable to previous generations, treat the entire planet as their domain. They are a law unto themselves, free to roam the globe in search of cheaper labour, more exploitable resources, more pliant governments and greater profits.

In collaboration with Canadian capitalists, successive Liberal and Conservative governments have put themselves at the service of these largely U.S.-based cartels. They now hold the power of life and death over every region and industry in our country. By their dictates, our resources have been plundered, our manufacturing capability denied. Canadian workers are their pawns in a global game of mergers, shutdowns, and relocations. These U.S. conglomerates have robbed us of our wealth and of the very power to determine our own future.

Massive world-wide unemployment and hunger are the legacy of these profiteering monopolies. Incapable of turning their technology and organization to the needs of people, they are collapsing under the weight of their hoarded wealth. They have distorted the economic development of the world so fundamentally — the resources they waste on war production, for instance, could eliminate hunger in the world — that world "markets" are glutted. Factories, shops and offices operate at half and three-quarters of their ability, while the world waits in need of the goods they could produce. There are no new frontiers for the multinationals. On the contrary, the crisis will only deepen. The micro-computer revolution will only intensify massive permanent unemployment, tedious and stressful jobs for remaining workers, and terrifying concentrations of knowledge and control in the hands of private corporations.

The central question posed by microtechnology, as by the multinational monopolies, is political. What kind of society do we want to create with the most powerful extensions of human labour and intelligence since the industrial revolution? If harnessed to popular administration and planning, microtechnology could help us achieve an era of abundance for all, release us from monotonous toil and enrich our store of accessible information.

The socialist option is the only alternative. Deepening of the world economic crisis is inevitable as long as profits dictate the course of humanity.

Social Ownership: The Only Solution

Canada is confronted by a political, social and economic emergency that demands straightforward solutions. If we are going to stamp out unemployment, secure our independence from the multinationals and steel ourselves for sweeping technological change, we need a socialist industrial strategy based on public ownership of the decisive sectors of the economy. The flaws of capitalism are too basic, the power of the corporations too great, the chasm separating the compulsions of profit and the needs of people too wide, for anything less to succeed.

The half-measures of a mixed economy dominated by big business cannot meet the challenge. The stock-in-trade of government intervention — tinkering with monetary and fiscal policy to stimulate investment and spending — has proven bankrupt. Welfare state policies such as "progressive taxation" and unemployment insurance, though won by hard struggles, have done nothing to correct deep-seated structures of regional and social inequality. Legislative reforms, aimed at the most blatant abuses of corporate power, are faltering. In these harsh economic times, corporations hold governments to ransom through their control of desperately needed investment. Even reform-minded governments have buckled under this pressure, and passed vicious legislation, slashing social services and trampling the basic rights of workers.

Capitalism has failed, and so have efforts to reform it. That failure puts a campaign for the socialist alternative on the immediate agenda.

New Democratic Party governments will replace corporate ownership with social ownership of the major firms in the manufacturing, resource, finance, transportation and communications industries. Only then can we plan for full employment, social equality and economic democracy.

Socially-owned banks and insurance companies will ensure that peoples' savings serve the people. These savings will be mobilized for massive job-creating projects in critical areas such as housing and social services. To create new wealth, a socialist government will call a halt to the U.S. drain on our natural resources and use these resources as building blocks for a rounded industrial economy. To correct a disastrous balance of payments and create new jobs, we will break from our dependency on foreign multinationals and establish our own manufacturing capability in heavy industry and high-technology equipment.

Economic Democracy

The needs of people, not profit, are the driving force of a socialist society. This wholesale reconstruction cannot be accomplished by crown corporations that perpetuate management privileges. It will be accomplished by democratizing all levels of society, and by making workers' control the touchstone of industrial relations.

Under capitalism, labour is a commodity. Workers are used as replaceable parts, extinctions of machines — as long as they provide dividends. Employers use their power of ownership to devastate the lives of workers through layoffs, shutdowns and neglect of health and safety. Unions, despite their courageous efforts, have encountered difficulties eliminating even the worst abuses of management power.

Socialism will dissolve the economic foundation of one-sided management privilege by relying on the needs and creativity of people. At the centrepiece of any NDP program will be the goal of enhancing the power that people can exercise over their own lives. This includes the passage of work environment laws to expand the scope and strength of collective agreements, giving workers decisive weight in every level of decision making, and ensuring that control over workers' pensions is placed in the hands of their elected union representatives. We believe in the ability of working people to manage their own productive institutions democratically.

Women's Rights

The modern Canadian women's movement has inspired us to renew and extend the socialist commitment to a society free from sexual discrimination.

Women remain the oppressed sex in Canada. Sexual discrimination is not only tolerated, it is entrenched at every level of society.

Years of piecemeal reform and dead letter laws have left women stranded in dead-end jobs at dead-end rates of pay. Loosely worded, poorly enforced equal pay laws and equal rights codes provide little protection for women at work. There are virtually no laws to protect women from the unemployment that is slated for them with the introduction of microtechnology.

Beyond the workplace, women's basic rights are continually denied. Hospitals and governments still interfere with a woman's basic right to make her own decision about maternity. Women are left to shoulder the major responsibility of childcare, because daycare facilities are

inadequate and under-funded. Violence makes victims of women in the home and in the community.

By taking the profit out of discrimination, a socialist society will take a crucial step towards women's rights. In cooperation with the independent women's movement, NDP governments will place top priority on legislation to guarantee equal pay for work of equal value, and affirmative action to promote women in areas where centuries of systematic discrimination must be overcome. Universal quality daycare will be established, either by extending the school system or funding local parent-child centres. Emergency shelters for battered wives will be funded by government, not charity. In recognition of women's inalienable rights to control their own bodies, funds will be allocated to birth control research, education, and to free-standing abortion clinics. The choice of maternity rests with a woman, in consultation with her doctor. Laws and hospital regulations that deny access to safe abortions will be repealed.

The Crisis of Federation

After 116 years of Confederation, we have not resolved the most pressing issues of federalism. We have not overcome the injustices of centuries-old conquests. We have not taken control of the levers of independent economic and cultural development. We have allowed corporations to treat East, West and North as resource hinterlands, to scar them with boom and bust development that leaves behind only a wealth of regional resentment.

The present constitution with its loopholed charter of individual rights cannot deal with problems of this magnitude. A renewed commitment to democracy and independence can. The crisis of Canadian nationhood can only be resolved on a basis of self-determination and equality of its peoples and regions.

An NDP government will guarantee full rights to self-determination to the Quebec and Native nationalities. We will guarantee and extend the linguistic rights of long-established francophone communities outside Quebec. We will abolish the Senate and Governor-Generalship as patronage-infested relics of the aristocratic age. We will establish an independent economy which the working people of Canada will control. We will extend that independence to the world of culture.

We will extend that control to regions, through decentralized planning, that puts an end to the tribute to Ottawa, Toronto and New York.

Peace and World Justice

Canada must establish a new and independent foreign policy to join the worldwide battle for peace and economic justice. In alliance with other international movements — for disarmament in the first world, for democracy in the second world, and for equality and national liberation in the third world — we can help tilt the balance that is now pushing the world toward nuclear annihilation. Such solidarity is only possible if we establish an independent economy, free from the dictates of the U.S. military-industrial complex, free to enjoy a world economic order based on cooperation rather than exploitation.

For decades, the world has endured a balance of nuclear terror based on the supposed deterrent value of mutual assured destruction. That balance now rests on a hair trigger that could be

brushed at any moment by the use of first-strike weapon systems. These weapons are designed primarily to re-establish U.S. supremacy through the threat of "winnable" nuclear war.

These weapons are the centrepiece of U.S.-dominated alliances such as NATO and NORAD. Canadian membership in these organizations places us in the front lines of responsibility for the production, testing and launching of nuclear missiles. A breakaway from these organizations and establishment of a nuclear weapons free zone in Canada could place us on the front lines of those fighting for a new world order.

We are dedicated to a world in which all nations renounce the use of nuclear weapons — a world based on the twin pillars of disarmament and economic justice. Both are preconditions of the other. Multi-billion dollar budgets now wasted on the war drive could wipe out world hunger and illiteracy in one year. To play a part in the creation of such a world, Canada needs an independent foreign policy and an economic order that rejects production for war.

An NDP Government in Power

A New Democratic Party government will seek to give political power to unorganized and organized working people, to farmers, women, students and all groups subjected to national oppression. A New Democratic Party government will develop a plan to legislate the key elements of its democratically determined program as the first step towards transforming Canada into a socialist society. Such a government will seek to educate and mobilize in defence of its legislative program against entrenched power blocs that may seek to thwart the will of the majority.

The New Democratic Party Left Caucus commits itself to a program based on the following objectives as priorities:

1. Public ownership of the decisive sectors of the economy and, in particular, of the resource, finance, manufacturing, transportation and communication sectors, to permit the development of an independent economy, production for use, economic planning and industrial democracy.
2. The development of a comprehensive industrial strategy dedicated to full employment. Massive public work programs and a shorter work week for the same takehome pay will be key elements in establishing everyone's right to a job.
3. The development of a comprehensive social strategy to eliminate poverty in Canada. Such a strategy will include minimum wages corresponding to basic levels of need, indexed pensions, disability and welfare allowances.
4. Full support for the rights of labour, including the abolition of all legislation limiting free collective bargaining, the encouragement of unionization, the safeguarding of the right to strike and to refuse unsafe work and the right to negotiate technological change.
5. Full support for the demands of the women's movement. In particular, we will promote affirmative action programs, establish the right of women to control their own bodies and to be paid equally for work of equal value as decisive measures to lead towards the realization of guaranteed equality in all social, economic and legal matters to women.

6. Legislation to guarantee the extension of fundamental human rights to all persons regardless of race, religion, sex, sexual orientation or physical or mental disability.

7. The constitutional extension of full democratic rights including the dismantling of undemocratic political institutions such as the Senate and reform of the patronage-ridden judicial system. We will undertake to pass legislation establishing democratic civilian control of police forces.

8. The right of self-determination for the Québécois and Native peoples.

9. Free, universal access to all levels of education from daycare to university.

10. Protection of the family-based farm. Special measures to break the power of the bankers and agri-business processors will include easy access to credit, encouragement of cooperatives and rationalized food production through producer-controlled marketing agencies.

11. Encouragement of an independent Canadian culture through measures guaranteeing funding and distribution rights for Canadian cultural workers and measures to offset U.S. domination of distribution rights in the theatre and magazine industries.

12. Protection of our environment from unacceptable and unnecessary pollutants such as acid rain, nuclear and toxic wastes and the creation of a policy that promotes safe and renewable energy sources.

13. An international policy reflecting a commitment to peace, global justice, the end of the nuclear arms race, and the declaration of a nuclear-weapons free zone in Canada.

14. An independent foreign policy for Canada which will no longer be dictated by the U.S. military system. An NDP government will immediately withdraw from NATO and NORAD and promote the international antiwar and disarmament movements.

The New Democratic Party is the party of the dispossessed and oppressed struggling to build a new world. We are both a social movement and a political party.

As a social movement, we support all struggles against the injustices of capitalism. Unions — together with popular organizations fighting for world peace, social equality and environmental safety — are the life-blood of our movement. As a political party, we seek to become a government that can implement legislation to meet the needs of working people.

We do not offer just a blueprint to a better future. We offer an invitation to all Canadians to join us, as we join them, in our common efforts to eradicate a social system based on exploitation, discrimination, poverty and war. The capitalist system must be replaced by socialist democracy. That is the burning issue of our era, the only hope of humanity.

(union “bug” Local 15 ITU)

For further information on ONDP Left Caucus contact Dave Tomczak.

A new phase of repression is about to begin in Poland. Not content with outlawing the independent trade union Solidarity nor with effectively suppressing all other traditional means of dissent, the military regime headed by General Jaruzelski is now set to stage a series of "show trials" against a select number of intellectuals and workers' representatives on charges of conspiracy and sedition. If found guilty -- and the official Polish press already berates them as such -- the accused face a maximum sentence of death.

Six of the accused were leaders of the KOR (an acronym for the Workers' Defense Committee, founded in 1976 and disbanded in September 1981). The remaining seven were leading spokespersons of Solidarity.

"Everything points to a juridical farce along the lines of the Moscow Trials or the trial of Dimitrov, accused of having burned the Reichstag." So stated Adam Michnik, one of the defendants, in his "Open Letter to the International Community" appealing for support.

Michnik's parallelling of the coming trials with the frame-up trials staged by Stalin and with those staged by Hitler during the thirties is a valid one. Their aim is the same: to serve up scapegoats for the regime's own crimes against the entire people of Poland. It is these bureaucrats and generals -- not the accused -- who are the real conspirators against the will of society and the real cause of social unrest in Poland.

The accusations themselves, moreover, are patent fabrications.

At no time have any of the defendants advocated terrorist violence or the overthrow of property relations that now prevail in Poland. They have all repeatedly called for peaceful change and a modification of the existing economic and political structures through a dialogue with the authorities. They have done so in explicit acceptance of Poland's military and economic alliance with the USSR. It is the state authorities who have sabotaged this peaceful and legitimate process advocated by the accused and who have resorted to armed terror and violence against the populace to achieve their ends.

Worldwide public opinion must not allow this monstrous political frame-up to go unchallenged. If carried out, these trials and threatened executions may be but a prelude to similar measures against the thousands who are still being held in prison and others who choose to continue to resist the repressive actions of the authorities.

We, the undersigned, appeal to the Polish authorities to:

- 1) immediately drop all charges against the accused;
- 2) immediately release them from custody;
- 3) halt all further harassment of them in exercising their legitimate rights of speech, publication and association;

AND FURTHER,

We appeal that, should the authorities persist in their present course, they grant the accused open trials held in full view of the world, and that they grant representatives of properly constituted bodies of international labour and legal opinion status before the Polish courts to monitor these trials and to participate in the defense of the accused.

Workers
Labour
Solidarity

When ^{March 15} Gleason saw this
letter in S.A. (with cuts)

Ross Dowson, #2311
40 Homewood Ave.,
Toronto, M4Y2K2
January 23, 1985

To the Editor
Socialist Action

It is good to see Socialist Action carrying material on Canadian unionist's struggle to establish control of their own unions. The only problem is that Nat Weinstein's arguments in his January article "Canadian split weakens auto workers union" place Socialist Action on the wrong side.

Canadian director Robert White's "demands" for autonomy which the class collaboration bureaucrats ensconced in Detroit rejected without so much as a discussion outside of their own cosy self-perpetuating 25-man club that answers only to itself are skipped over leaving the implication that in some way they were unreasonable and Bieber's rejections justified --all in the interests, of course, of autoworkers unity.

Weinstein deplores; "Had GM workers on both sides of the border struck together..." But that is just what Bieber's "give-aways" did not allow to happen. As for the question as to whether Canadian workers are ~~intrinsically~~ more militant - or have a greater capacity for struggle - interesting , but quite irrelevant to the question at hand.

The Canadian workers want unity to fight the auto-bosses, but they want to run their own show in collaboration with US autoworkers which means, among other matters that came up, control of their own strike funds. The question of democratic rights ~~exist~~ of Canadian unionists still caught up in the bureaucratically controlled machinery of the so-called "internationals" is a highly explosive one. More and more Canadian unionists are establishing their autonomous rights in opposition to the US bureaucrats and hence outside of the "internationals".

Robert White is by no means a militant, nor is he a maverick. His stance at the December 10 showdown had the support ~~of~~, almost unanimous support, of the broadly based Canadian Council. The fact that he did not call a referendum vote was not at all in fear that he did not have an overwhelming majority but more likely in agreement with the rest of the Canadian Labour Congress executive to carry it off "cold", not to inflame the passions of the ranks and thereby heighten their anticipations. For this is certainly an explosive situation that threatens to blow up all the conservatizing decrepit structures that are a barrier to the unions struggling for and winning such critical demands as the sliding scale of hours. Some persons who should know better have dismissed this struggle for union democracy, for Canadian autonomy with the ~~parasitic~~ term "Canadian nationalism."

they use pejoratively as
"label they use pejoratively as"

with his former rank in solidarity

Ross Dowson

Ross Dowson, #2311
Toronto, M4Y 2K2, Canada
March 25, 1985

Socialist Action
San Francisco

Comrades;

No, I don't think that the separation of Canadian workers in their own union centrals from the U.S.-based so-called "internationals" [although the norm in other advanced capitalist states] is a matter of principle, as Nat Weinstein suggests I may in his reply to my letter reproduced in your March issue. Although other than the Francophone workers organized in the Quebec union centrals there are 40,000 Canadian unionists organized in the Council of Canadian Unions who do think that it is a matter of principle.

But that is certainly the direction of the mainstream Canadian Labour Congress which encompasses most Canadian members of the U.S.-based unions in this nation-state called Canada. It is not many years ago the CLC delegates in national convention and with great enthusiasm passed a series of autonomy guidelines for the adherence of all affiliates. The Beiber leadership of the Autoworkers was among those who had been more flexible in complying with the guidelines than others--but apparently not sufficiently so. The latest resistance comes from the top brass of the Labourers' Union which has just put one of its largest Canadian locals under a U.S. national office trusteeship.

While union membership in the U.S. stagnates, in Canada it continues to grow. The national unions affiliated to the Canadian Labour Congress have now for the first time more members in their ranks than the U.S.-based unions. Furthermore they are mobilizing the worker in the new and high-tech industries, a great many of them women who are putting fresh air in labour's sails. Reagan and Weinberger through their perilous manipulation of their junior partners in Ottawa are further stimulating the whole process.

in solidarity

Ross Dowson

A criticism

Dear editor,

It is good to see *Socialist Action* carrying material on unionists' struggles to establish control of their own unions. The only problem is that Nat Weinstein's arguments in his January 1985 article, "Canadian split weakens auto workers union," place *Socialist Action* on the wrong side.

Canadian director Robert White's "demands" for autonomy, which the class-collaborationist bureaucrats in Detroit rejected without so much as a discussion, are skipped over in Weinstein's article. The implication is left that in some way these "demands" were unreasonable and Bieber's rejections justified—all in the interests, of course, of auto workers' unity.

Weinstein deplores, "Had the GM workers on both sides of the border struck together...."

But that is just what Bieber's "give-aways" did not allow to happen.

The Canadian workers want unity to fight the auto bosses, but they want to run their own show in collaboration with U.S. auto workers. Among other things, this means control of their own strike funds.

The question of democratic rights of Canadian unionists caught up in the bureaucratically controlled machinery of the so-called "internationals" is a highly explosive one. More and more Canadian unionists are establishing their autonomous rights in opposition to the U.S. bureaucrats and hence outside of the "internationals."

from the
MARCH 1985



Robert White is by no means a militant, nor is he a maverick. His stance at the Dec. 10 showdown had the almost unanimous support of the broadly based Canadian Council.

Some persons who should know better have dismissed this struggle for union democracy, for Canadian autonomy, with the label they use pejoratively as "Canadian nationalism."

Ross Dowson,
Toronto

A response

It seems to me that Ross Dowson has misunderstood the general thrust of my story on the split in the UAW. There is nothing there that contradicts the conception of local autonomy for the Canadian section of the UAW *within the framework of an effective, fighting union structure encompassing all auto workers.*

Autonomy that prevents joint action against the boss or which isolates a more combative wing from the main body of the union is a step in the wrong direction.

Dowson clearly seems to be arguing for *Canadian* autonomy, which is another matter. His conception of autonomy seems to go further

than the usual meaning of the term.

It is a long-standing principle, in the best traditions of the workers' movement, to permit local autonomy on local matters. This is indispensable to workers' democracy and to the development of a self-acting local leadership.

Working-class internationalism is no less a principle. It is wrong, because it is self-defeating, to permit national boundaries to obstruct working-class unity.

This is not at all intended to imply that Canadian UAW members—or any other local affiliate of the international union—must, in principle, accept bureaucratic treatment at the hands of the top officialdom.

The right to resist bureaucratic violations of workers' democracy includes the right to separate if necessary. But Dowson seems to be arguing that separation for *Canadian* workers is a *principle*.

Even if the issue were indeed that of "Canadian nationalism," the relevant principle is *the right to separate—not separation itself.*

Other than the difference of opinion cited above, Dowson and I seem to have a common view of the debilitating effects of the class-collaborationist, sell-out policies of union bureaucracies exemplified by the Bieber misleadership of the UAW.—

NAT WEINSTEIN

We're opening Camp Poundmaker on May 19 and 20th weekend —on the Salmon River near Napanee--contact Dowson 961-4554

Socialist ACTION

(Copy)

On the founding of the Canadian auto workers union [CAW]

Article notes title -- by Web Ed.) Handwritten unpublished notes on the founding of the Canadian Autoworkers Union, by R.D. found in 1985

Come September the some 125,000 Canadian autoworkers affiliated to the Canadian Labour Congress will gather at convention to launch the Canadian Autoworkers Union independent of the structures governing the US membership of the United Autoworkers. There is certain to be a continued relationship with the US autoworkers union headed by Beiber not only (by) reason of the fact that the Canadian CAW was born (with) the bulk of the membership of the new union (being in) conflict with the same powerful set of bosses – GM, Ford & Chrysler – who dominate auto production on the continent, all the more so because of the Auto Pact and the strong bonds of solidarity through which the giant auto monopoly divided up the lush North American market.

The dispute of the Canadian-based White leadership with the US-based Beiber autoworkers leadership appeared to burst out so unexpectedly, and to escalate so rapidly that it caught most, even some seasoned observers, by surprise. But in reality it has been a long-festering one and marks a decisive turning point in the lengthy struggle of the Canadian union movement as it has grown in numbers, experience & maturity to set up a structure & forge a leadership of its own under its own control.

In fact it is the culminating point in the struggle that then UAW director Dennis McDermott warned about as being irrepressible, as little as a year before the historic CLC convention in Vancouver in 1974. McDermott cautioned the international (US-based) leadership against dismissing "the fervent nationalistic attitudes that pervade this country... It is my current belief," he warned "that unless international unions in Canada can make some fairly drastic accommodations & adjustments to the needs of the current emotions in this country, then the role of the internationals is in serious jeopardy. Genuine internationalist unionism in Canada as a true partner is one thing," he said. "A US union with a branch plant mentality and Canada treated as an occasionally patronizing afterthought is something else," he said.

Then as now the question of mergers, the fractured character of the Canadian labor movement and mergers to be overcome was a burning one. Half the 87 US-based unions that in all represent about 70% of the CLC membership had fewer than 500 members – but there could be no mergers in Canada without US head office consent or unless prior mergers taking place in the US made them an automatic process in Canada.

It was the Canadian Steelworkers leadership, then as now, who struck out against demands for Canadian trade union autonomy at the same time as it, with the support of the CLC executive, struck out against the demand of Quebec unions for special status within the CLC. They equated Quebec nationalism to Canadian nationalism which they

opposed equally, as did guest speaker Labor minister John Munro, representing the Trudeau government, who opined that "while ardent nationalism can in some areas be both wholesome and beneficial, this is not one of those areas."

When the CLC brass rejected Quebec autonomy demands the delegates to the 1974 CLC convention rose up in a tumultuous outburst to defeat it. As the same convention reaffirmed what became known as guidelines of Canadian autonomy were, although of the 87 affiliated internationals only 37 claimed to have not all three of them (below), and a decision (taken) expressing determination (they) be complied with: 1) election of Canadian officers by Canadians; 2) determination of officers dealing with Canadian policies by elected Canadian officers or members, 3) and authority to be vested in Canadian elected representatives to speak for the union in Canada.

Now some ten years later, we have witnessed the decline in strength of the mass industrial union membership, the defection of ten construction trades unions and the assumption of the Carpenters, Labourers & Ironworkers of a dual membership in the AFL-CIO and in the Canadian Labour Congress, and the continued growth of the Canadian national unions with the vast influx of women members, so that they have become the majority of CLC membership.

It is this long ongoing struggle for autonomy by the Canadian membership of US-based unions that explains the united and relatively smooth and cool decision to split the Canadian autoworkers from the Detroit centre. Not one delegate in attendance at the April 1st meeting of the Canadian and the Quebec Canadian US UAW councils expressed any opposition to White's report-back of the UAW executive vote of 24 to one rejection of the Council's bid for Canadian autonomy.

Nine days earlier the 300-member Council had authorized White to ask the executive board for full and complete Canadian autonomy. According to *< i>Toronto Star (labor editor)*

(- notes end) (See also:

FORWARD, 1984, Nov.12-3: "Canadian Autoworkers buck US leadership pattern")

Bob White: Hard Bargains; My life on the line, 1988, McClelland & Stewart, Toronto, especially Chapters 20-21: A Separate Union, Strong, Independent and Penniless, pp. 365-410

961-4554
Ross Dowson, #2311
40 Homewood Ave.,
Toronto M4Y 2K2
August 8, 1986

Judy Stoffman & Danny Stoffman
c/o Lester & Orpem Dennys

I only came across Beverley Stopen's note in last Sunday's Star on your preparation of Kadar's for publication as In the Name of the Working Class.

It immediately called to mind the Summer 1985 issue of a magazine published in England called Labour Focus in Eastern Europe. That issue contained for the first time in English a speech that Imre Nagy delivered to the central committee of the Hungarian Workers Party on June 27 1953. To some considerable degree this speech projects the famed speech that Khrushov delivered to the startled delegates to the 20th Congress of the CPSU--but some three years earlier. A preceding issue of Labor Focus reproduced an informed article by a leading worker-militant on the Budapest Commune, which he headed up.

Probably you are aware that the Canadian Labour Congress has very firmly identified itself with the Solidarnosc movement. The Ontario office on Gervais Boulevard has allocated space to an official representative of Solidarnosc who published a bulletin that is circulated from there. They might be approached with a view to helping promote your book. They might be helpful to the film crews you have coming.

I have a ~~battered~~ file of Labour Focus which appeared irregularly over the past couple of years. It has just recently been taken over by the publisher of New Left Review and I am expecting the first issue of the new series any day now.

sincerely

Ross Dowson

Canada's

CHINESE INTEGRAL

*Racism
Pollution
Prejudice
Inequality
Insecurity
No Housing
Mis-education*

**100
Years of
Injustice**



Wars

Vietnam

Korea

WW II

WW I

Boer

Depression

Union Busting

Resources Steal

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921-4627

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CONTENTS

In this issue we depart from our regular format to present a special issue on Canada's Centennial. In four major articles we review the little told but decisive story of the struggles of Canadian workers and farmers to build this country.

Here is the real story of Canada, the story of her people. Next issue we will return to our regular format.

Introduction

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How They Devised Confederation

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All the festivities this year are in celebration of the Confederation of Canada in 1867. Jacquie Henderson takes a look at what actually happened at the time of Confederation, at what kind of men John A. MacDonald and the other "Fathers of Confederation" were, what their motives were, and what were the real political and economic goals of Confederation.

A Hundred Years of Heroic Struggle

9

One hundred years have passed since Confederation. One hundred years of tremendous profits for Canadian business. But what of the farmers who grew the crops, and the workers who built the mighty industries? For them the past century has meant an unending struggle for decent crop prices, for union recognition and often simply for enough to eat. For them this past century has imposed One Hundred Years of Injustice!

Myth and Reality

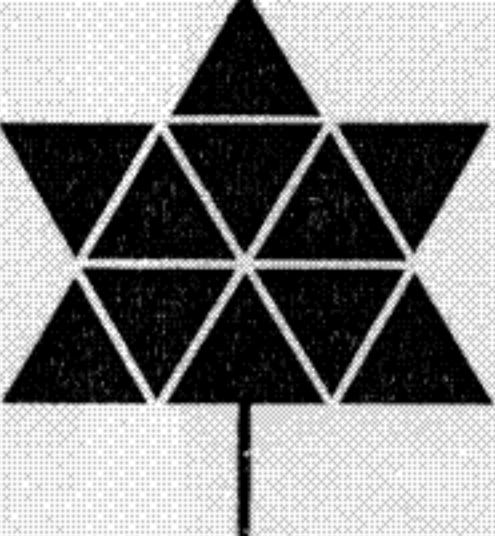
15

Which Canada do you live in? There are, even in Centennial year, two Canadas: the Canada of the immense majority, well below the standard of the "middle-class"; and the Canada of the thin layer of very wealthy families who own and control society, whose very position in society depends on creating and recreating poverty.

Next Leap Ahead

19

One of Canada's leading socialists discusses Canada's future. He examines the powerful forces at work in Canadian society straining toward socialism, forces springing from the very successes of Canadian capitalism. How will socialism be won, and what will socialist Canada be like? Just what does history have in store for us?



The Purpose of the Celebrations

Beautiful Canada, changing, developing, kaleidoscopic, creative, dynamic, yes, swinging Canada — that is the image that is being projected from all sides this Centennial year.

There is no question that from 1867 to 1967 the changes in this northernmost half of the North American continent have been colossal. From hand-sowing of wheat to modern grain growing; from corduroy roads to subways cutting through the earth and aircraft soaring over it; from the water-wheel to nuclear power.

But neither these hymns to the beauties and natural wealth of this subcontinent, nor the lyrics to our creativity tell anything of the robber barons' ruthless pillage of these vast natural resources and the deprival of future generations of their use, tell anything of the toll in human agony and blood our forefathers expended in making Canada what it is today.

Quite the contrary. The official festivities are designed to cover over the real Canada, of both yesterday and today. They are an attempt to reaffirm Confederation at a time when the Quebec nation is restive and again seeking to establish its rights, at a time when U.S. capital has flooded over the border and completely undermined one of the main purposes of its devisors — the establishment of Canada as a private preserve for British capital and the rising Canadian capitalists.

The celebrations are an attempt to forge a "national unity", at a time when capital is out to impose compulsory arbitration on ever-widening forces of a restive trade union membership, and when the NDP is making new headway against the old parties of confederation and the big business interests.

Through the celebrations they are attempting to firm up a myth — the myth that the Canadian working class, which created the wealth and power that is Canada today, and the handful of men who own and

control it, have a common, a national purpose.

They are especially trying to convince Canadian youth, who are questioning all the worn-out concepts of the world the men at the top own, who are increasingly disturbed by Ottawa's role in the world, particularly in Vietnam — that if we stick with the established authorities, if we adapt and conform to the old ways, then the country, all of us together, will go forward.

In this issue of *Young Socialist Forum*, we depart from our normal format to study the myth and the reality of Canada, to set the record straight and to indicate the way forward. Because despite the speeches, ads and pageants, despite the millions that have been poured into Centennial, there is only one real way to act in harmony with the enormous changes that are taking place in Canada — by joining the struggle to build a new Canada, a socialist Canada in a socialist world.



How They Devised Confederation



By Jacquie Henderson

In 1867, a giant was launched, a mighty country that was soon to stretch from sea to sea, rich in almost every conceivable resource, beautiful beyond compare.

Now, 100 years later, celebrations hail the honorable men who laid the foundations of Canada – John A. Macdonald, Georges Cartier, Thomas D'Arcy McGee, George Brown, Alexander Galt, heroes all. With foresight and patriotism, with no thought of personal gain, they pulled together the British North American colonies, establishing an independent nation.

Well, that's what the organizers of Centennial say, anyway.

The newspapers are full of articles about the "Fathers of Confederation" – but they never mention the fantastic wealth these men gained through Confederation, from corruption and bribery alone. We hear of these great democrats – but we never hear of Macdonald's belief that "there is no inalienable right in any man to exercise the franchise." We hear about the opening of the west, but never about the money and property the CPR was given to open the west. We hear speech after speech about national unity, but never a word about the continuing suppression of Quebec – a suppression organized and sanctified by Confederation.

The men who first met in Charlottetown in 1864 acted solely in their own interests. With indescribable cynicism, they proceeded to found Canada – their own private treasure chest.

Theirs was not a struggle for independ-

ance from Britain. Indeed, the "Mother Country" encouraged and supported Confederation. Britain's industrial capitalism dominated the world – the British capitalists had no need for colonies as such at that time. They saw in Confederation a means of eliminating some of the expenses and bother of the colonies; in particular they saw a chance to eliminate large defense efforts. On the other hand, the newly matured Canadian capitalist class wanted British support in its development. This became clear when Britain lent Canada money – to buy out the British-owned Hudson's Bay Company.

In fact, Confederation did not bring independence – it brought very few new rights to the colonies. Canada still had no power over foreign policy. It was not until sixty-five years later, with the Statute of Westminster, that Canada gained more or less complete independence. The Canadian constitution is still formally controlled by the British Parliament.

If there is one thing Canadians value highly today, it is our democratic rights – freedom of speech, religion and association – rights which, though somewhat limited and often under attack, are truly important. But they weren't won by the "Fathers of Confederation", and they weren't won by sitting around a conference table. Thirty years before Confederation, revolts broke out in Upper and Lower Canada. The rebels fought the oppression of the Chateau Clique and the Family Compact – the political representatives of the wealthy landowners and merchants who ruled the colonies with an iron hand. In French Canada, Louis Joseph Papineau led the struggle of small mer-

chants and farmers against the tiny group who were bleeding the population dry for British financial interests. He said to the ruling British: "We are told: be brothers! Yes, let us be that. But you wish to have everything; power, position, gold. It is this injustice which we cannot tolerate. We demand political institutions which correspond to our social state."

In English Canada, William Lyon Mackenzie led a rebellion in an unsuccessful attempt to uproot the Family Compact. He wrote in a leaflet distributed in 1837: "Brave Canadians! God has put it into the bold and honest hearts of our brethren in Lower Canada to revolt - not against 'lawful' but against 'unlawful' authority. The law says we shall not be taxed without our consent by the voices of the men of our choice, but a wicked and tyrannical government has trampled upon that law - robbed the exchequer - divided the plunder - and declared that, regardless of justice they will continue to roll in their splendid carriages, and riot in their palaces, at our expense - that we are poor spiritless ignorant peasants, who were born to toil for our betters. But the peasants are beginning to open their eyes and to feel their strength . . ."

Papineau and Mackenzie fought for the great ideals of the American and French revolutions, and though the rebellions were crushed, it was in response to their actions that the democratic rights we have were granted. They believed that freedom is the right of the people, that, as Mackenzie wrote: "when the great questions on which the prosperity of the country rests are temperately discussed and fully understood out of doors, there will be no difficulty in making any governor or any Assembly respect the public will truly and solemnly expressed." What a tremendous contrast there is between these leaders and the "Fathers", who sat in Charlottetown's tea-rooms, horse-trading the future of half a continent!

What were they horse-trading for? Not for the political and social freedoms Mackenzie and Papineau wanted. They saw in Confederation the necessary political act which would enable Canadian capitalism to grow and expand.

J.M.S. Careless, in *Brown of the Globe*, expresses the reaction of one of the Fathers of Confederation, George Brown, to the growing U.S. economy. "A scantily armed and loose-knit band of states had been transformed into a centralized national republic, its industrial might advancing as irresistably as its armies. Who could stand against it in North America? . . . Yet while he (Brown) remained sceptical of the likelihood of actual American attack, he fully recognized the danger from the republic - from the very numbers, wealth, and energy that would make an armed invasion un-

necessary, as the United States advanced its influence into the unorganized, underdeveloped British North West. Here, where the stakes were almost half a continent itself, he plainly realized the need for British North American union."

Brown and his cohorts knew their future lay in the west, in the exploitation of the prairie lands and the natural wealth of the west coast. They wanted to keep that wealth out of the hands of the Americans - not for the benefit of the Canadian people, but for themselves and their British partners.

But in order to open the west for exploitation, a transcontinental railway system was needed. Who was to pay for it? English financial interests had already poured large amounts into Canadian railroad building. But these investments were minute in comparison with what was needed now.

The financial magnates of Montreal and Toronto, eager for the speculative profits (and graft) that could come with the railways, saw an easy source of funds. They would overcome their differences, build the railway, stop the Yankees -- and the Canadian people would pay!

Signs of the Times

"The Grand Trunk Railway governs Canada at the present moment. Its power is paramount. The ministry are mere puppets in its hands and dance whatever tune the Company pipes."

-- Toronto Globe April 22, 1857

"My creed has been -- social democracy -- or equality of each man before society - and political democracy -- or the equality of each man before the law."

-- Mackenzie 1840

To create the means to get at the public purse, a strong central government was needed. **British North America at Confederation**, a study by the Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations, describes it this way: "Intercolonial railways were the necessary physical basis of Confederation; but at the same time, Confederation appeared to be the necessary political basis for intercontinental railways . . . Railways were not mere adjuncts to Confederation, they were of its essence."

Naturally the railway promoters became the most enthusiastic of the Confederation boosters. Outstanding among them was one Alexander Galt, a leading promoter and contractor who had large interests in the Grand Trunk Railroad -- in which there was already a good deal of public money. Speaking of the promoters in the Legislative Council in 1865, Antoine Aimé Dorion, an

opponent of Confederation stated: "As to the advantages of the Intercolonial Railway, I have not the slightest idea that my honourable friend had any suspicion whatsoever of the motives which animated these Grand Trunk officials, and that their object was to have another haul at the public purse for the Grand Trunk - but this was the origin of the revival of the scheme for constructing the Intercolonial Railway... some other scheme had to be concocted for bringing aid and relief to the unfortunate Grand Trunk - and the Confederation of all the British North American Provinces naturally suggested itself to the Grand Trunk officials as the surest means of bringing with it the construction of the Intercolonial Railway. Such was the origin of this Confederation scheme."

In the long range, there was much to be gained for the Canadian capitalists, united in one country from sea to sea for more efficient exploitation. In the short range, there was much to be gained from the building of the railroads. And every official had a finger in the railroad pie - most prominent was John A. Macdonald, who, in 1872, accepted \$350,000 in "campaign contributions" from Sir Hugh Allen, who had just received from Macdonald's government a charter to build a railway to the Pacific. When Macdonald's Liberal opponents revealed this, the scandal forced the government to resign. One of the documents which was exposed was a letter sent by Allen to his American associates. It read in part: "yesterday we entered into an agreement, by which the Government bound itself to form a company of Canadians only, according to my wishes. That the company will make me President, and that I and my friends will get a majority of the stock, and that the contract for building the road will be given to this company in terms of the Act of Parliament. Americans are to be carefully excluded, in fear that they will sell it to the Northern Pacific. But I fancy we can get over that in some way or another.

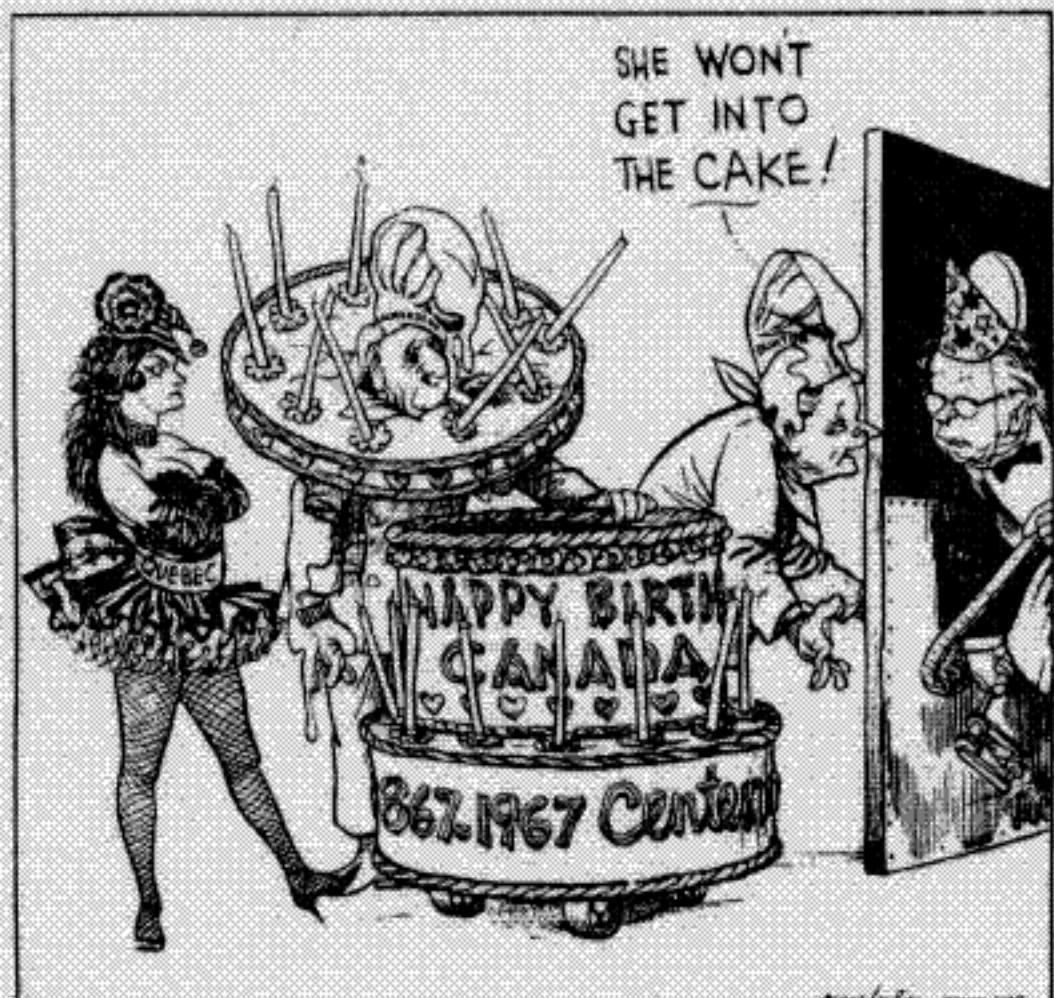
"This position has not been attained without large payments of money. I have already paid over \$200,000 and I will have at least \$100,000 more to pay."

John A.'s Senate

"There should be a large property qualification for the upper house, which is then the representative of property. It should be independant as far as property goes."

"We must protect the interests of the minorities, and the rich are always fewer in number than the poor."

JOHN A. MACDONALD



In today's terms, this graft would be equivalent to 5 or 10 million dollars - and it was nothing compared to the fantastic profits the CPR was later to reap.

Even as the Canadian capitalists, in alliance with the British, saw in Confederation a chance to expand their influence and investments, they saw in it the method they had sought to crush another group of opponents - the French Canadians.

Papineau's rebellion had lasted much longer and had had more impact than MacKenzie's. The British were then doubly vicious in repressing it. The investigator sent to examine the situation in the colonies, Lord Durham, made special recommendations for dealing with the French. He advocated union of the colonies, to swamp the Quebecois with an English majority. "I have little doubt," he wrote, "that the French, when once placed... in a minority, would abandon their vain hopes of nationality."

Most commentators agree that "... at a time when the handful of writers in English Canada were still groping toward a distinctive national expression, French Canadian nationalism flowered in a literary and historical movement," (*Canada; A Political and Social History*, Edgar McInnes). Yet this representative of the nation that defeated the French forces in Lower Canada years before could write: "they are a people with no history, and no literature." No important works in English, at any rate.

George Brown and Macdonald were both very clear on this aspect of Confederation. After the Quebec Conference, Brown wrote to his wife: "... constitution adopted - a most creditable document - a complete reform of all the abuses and injustices we have complained of!! Is it not wonderful! French Canadianism entirely extinguished!"



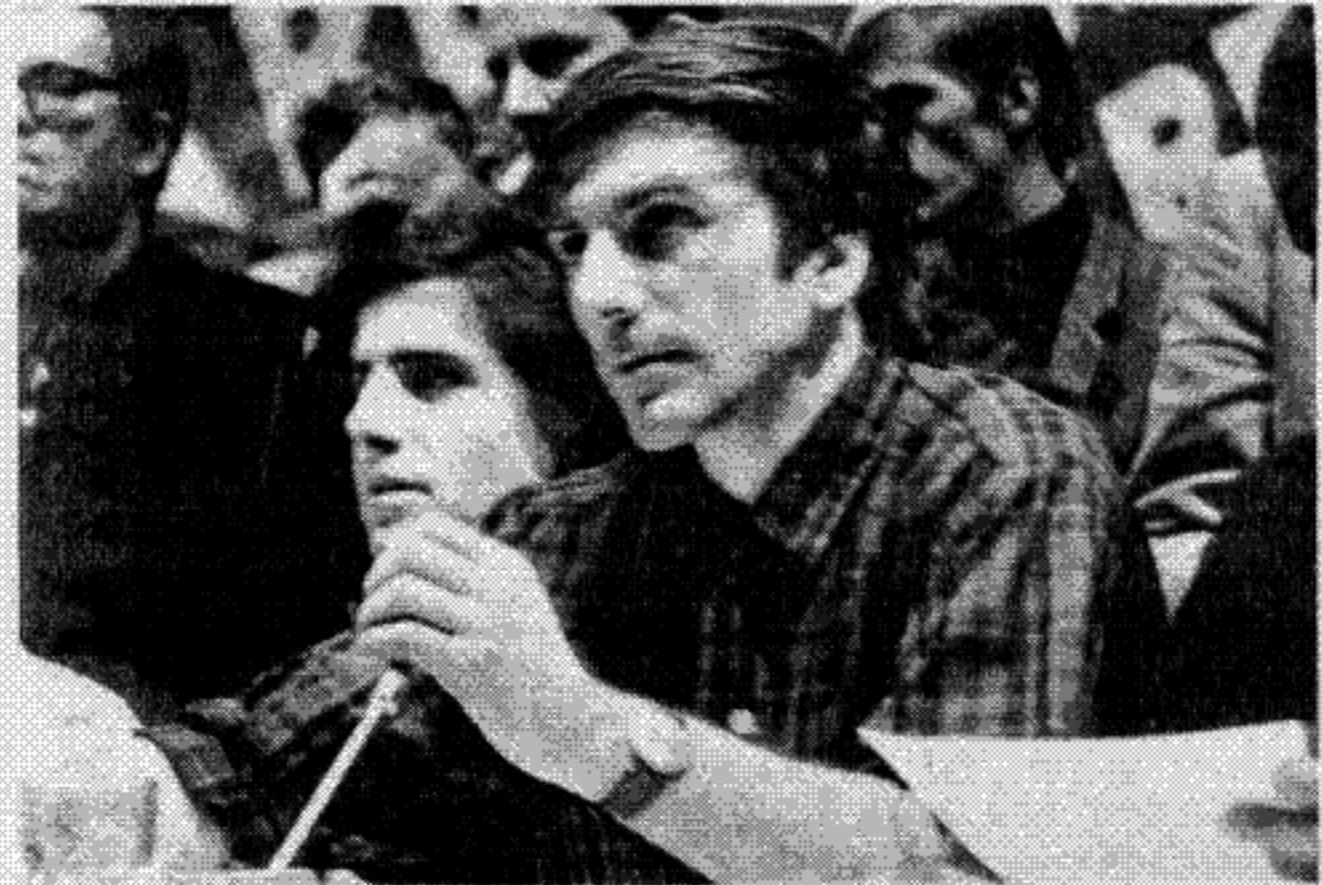
A demonstration of 20,000 youth in Berlin Feb. 18 in support of the Vietnamese revolution. Marchers carried photos of Che Guevara and Ho Chi Minh, as well as Rosa Luxemburg (left) and Karl Liebknecht (right), leaders of the German revolution of 1918.

Solidarity with Rudi Dutschke!

On April 11, Rudi Dutschke, leader of the German Socialist Student Federation (SDS), was shot. Dutschke is prominently associated with the large and militant demonstrations of German students against the war in Vietnam. He has also helped organize demonstrations against the mass production of "specialized idiots" by universities and in favor of Student Power. His would-be assassin said he was inspired by the assassination of Martin Luther King.

The students responded to this act of terror by stating that they saw it not as an act of an isolated "kook" but that of a society which creates an atmosphere of open season on radical students. Thousands of students throughout Germany demonstrated continuously for days following the shooting. Their demonstrations were primarily directed against the Springer press monopoly which has whipped up a campaign against the students with banner headlines declaring: STOP DUTSCHKE'S RED TERROR!

The growing radicalization of students around the world — a radicalization which Dutschke symbolizes — will only increase in the face of such reactionary persecution. Students throughout Europe, England, Asia and North America responded to the shooting with demonstrations of indignation. In Canada, the YSA/LJS sent messages of solidarity to SDS, and the anti-war Spring Mobilization Committee held a demonstration in Toronto, declaring the act an attack on the international anti-war movement.



Rudi Dutschke (in plaid shirt) at February 17 Vietnam anti-war conference in Berlin.

Mary Alice Waters, National Secretary of the American Young Socialist Alliance, interviewed Rudi Dutschke last February. The interview took place at Rudi's home in Berlin after a conference of 20,000 youth against the U.S. aggression in Vietnam. She says of Rudi:

"His political evolution in recent months has been quite striking, moving from a position reflecting Herbert Marcuse's disdain for the working class as a force for social change to a more Marxist understanding of the class nature of society and the necessity of fighting for a socialist transformation of the capitalist countries."

Long live Rudi Dutschke!

1969

THE LEAGUE FOR
SOCIALIST
ACTION LA
LIGUE
SOCIALISTE OUVRIERE

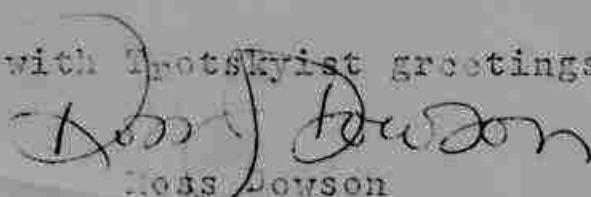
April 1, 1969
1 Cumberland Street
Toronto

Col/water;

Dear Comrades;

It was really a pleasure to read Mary's note that you have taken the decision to constitute yourselves as ~~xxx~~ a branch of the League. I am confident that you will quickly find that this will result in a qualitative change developing in your relationship with one another as comrades and revolutionary socialists, ⁽ⁱⁿ⁾ and that absolutely vital task we have before us of building the revolutionary socialist vanguard so essential to the achievement of a socialist Canada in a socialist world.

I really regret that I will be unable to be with you at your inaugural meeting. However I have spoken to Legula with regards to your request that she speak on the Building of the Revolutionary Cadre. She is agreed and will be there on April 13th. I have shown John your letter and I am sure that he will make every effort to be with you.

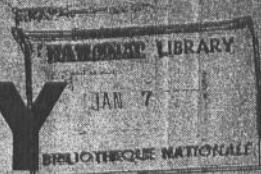
with Trotskyist greetings

Ross Bowson
executive secretary.

young socialist forum

january 1970 15c

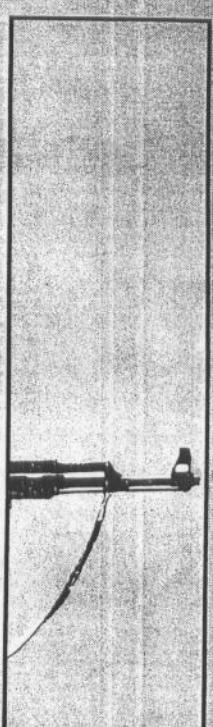
- vocational high schools - you need a permit to breathe
- Canadian independence and the fight for socialism

REVOLUTION UNTIL VICTORY



ثورة حتى النصر دافعوا عن الثورة العربية

DEFEND THE ARAB REVOLUTION



young socialist forum

may

1970

15



LORED RIEL—

his spirit

lives

on

**SELF
DETERMINATION
FOR ALL PEOPLE!**

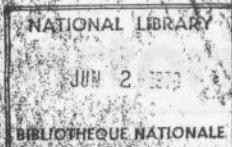
**no
canadian
"peace"**

young Socialist forum

June

1970

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MASSACRE AT KENT, JACKSON

- eyewitness account
- U.S. student strike

Young Socialist

Nov. 1970 15 cents

CRISIS!

- Quebec under seige
- The fight for civil liberties
- Political prisoner speaks



young socialist

Jan-Feb 1971 15 cents

- Socialist convention in occupied Quebec
- A nurse speaks out
- Human nature



Young Socialists meet

Biggest convention plans campaigns

The newspaper commentators and politicians who have been gleefully announcing the death of student radicalism should have been in Montreal, December 31-January 2. They would have been able to see the largest cross-country gatherings of revolutionary youth in decades.

The Fifth Bi-national Convention of the Young Socialists/Ligue des Jeunes Socialistes demonstrated not a decline in the radicalization, but an increase. Almost half of the 230 participants had joined the YS/LJS in the past year. Several joined during the convention. The delegates came from twenty cities, in every province. But Prince Edward Island, from 24 Universities and 16 high schools.

Seventeen percent were in the same situation as thousands of other Canadian youth — the educated unemployed.

This was a serious meeting of revolutionaries, to discuss problems and exchange experiences, and above all to plan action. The long, lively and democratic discussions projected full-scale campaigns: building the campaign for the freeing of Quebec political prisoners, a Spring mobilization against the war in Vietnam, and the February 13's March on Ottawa for free abortion on demand. In addition, the delegates planned an expansion drive, including a financial drive, and heavy concentration on sending travelling organizers into new areas.

It wasn't a convention without problems. There were little problems — the wires for the homemade simultaneous translation system hung everywhere, and the translators broke down on occasion; the hall was too small for all the people who came; and it took too long for everyone to recover from the New Year's Party. And there were big problems — the problems of building a cross-country leadership for the student movement.

But every convention has problems — at this convention you were part of the solution.

The Convention showed its orientation to full solidarity with the Quebec struggle by adjourning one session to take part in a demonstration of support for the Quebec political prisoners in Tangay prison.

It showed internationalism by including in its discussions representatives from England, Palestine, France, the U.S., New Zealand, and Belgium.

And above all, it showed, by its seriousness, by its adoption of a clear program of action, why the YS/LJS has grown while every other radical group has stagnated.

On these pages we include photos, resolutions, interviews and excerpts from discussions at the Convention.

PAS DE QUÉBEC LIBRE

SANS FEMMES LIBÉRÉES



"No free Quebec without liberated women" one of the many banners which decorated the hall, criss-crossed with wires from the translation system.



Brenda Zannis, who coordinated the convention translation system. The homemade equipment enabled the three days' proceedings to be carried in French and English simultaneously.

Photos by
Michel Mill
and
Norm Faria



The presiding committee, which supervi



It wasn't all talk! Delegates at the New Year's Eve party do a pantomime on the theme of opposition to the repression in Quebec.

They hitch-hiked, borrowed, to get to the convention

The participants in the YS/LJS Convention travelled, in total, almost 180,000 miles to reach Montreal — an average of 1,200 miles per person.

They came by every possible method of transportation — regular and chartered buses, cars, trains, planes for those who could get youth fare. Two hitch-hiked (in mid-winter) from Saskatoon.

Financing the travel was a major campaign in itself. Vancouver Young Socialists silk-screened and sold Women's Liberation, Quebec Libre and Che flags. Other locals held auctions, dances and plain appeals for funds. YSers borrowed from parents, friends and anyone else they could find. They put their paychecks into a common fund. Selling crocheted scarfs helped in one area: in another, people worked right through Christmas in order to get New Year's off.

The capitalists and their allies may have most of the money, but the YS/LJS has determination, and in the long run that's what's going to count.

in occupied Quebec



A big attraction at the convention was the display of revolutionary literature including the new pamphlet, "Free Quebec Political Prisoners".



ervised the convention proceedings.



Free the women prisoners was the theme of the New Year's Day demonstration at Tanguay prison for victims of the War Measures Act. The convention, 200 strong, adjourned to take part.

Free the prisoners! Free Quebec!

(Excerpts from the resolution "Students and the Quebec Revolution" adopted by the convention.)

On the 16th of October, in the name of "law and order", the Canadian government proclaimed the War Measures Act. With machine guns in hand, a foreign army invaded Quebec territory. The Quebecois, scoffed at for more than 200 years, find themselves totally deprived of the rights they have constantly fought for.

Did the government fear the FLQ, a group of individuals who are isolated from the mass nationalist movement? Were the special laws designed simply to capture FLQers?

No. The deploying of repressive forces proves that the aim was to head and stop the rise of Quebec independentism, which calls into question the very basis of Canadian capitalism. The FLQ manifesto described, among other things, the conditions of life inflicted on the Quebecois. Even though they disagreed with the FLQ's methods, many Quebecois strongly identified with this description.

In Quebec, a key aspect of our oppression can be summed up by the one question: "Do you speak English?" This is a bread-and-butter question for the Quebecois, the vast majority of whom are French-speaking.

At the root of our oppression is a handful of foreign monopolies, leeches on our wealth. The Power Corporation, Iron Ore, Canadair, Noranda Mines, Alcan, G.M. and other monopolies, mostly American and English Canadian, have appropriated our riches, and control us.

In 1839 Lord Durham wrote: "The majority of

workers are of French origin, but are in the service of English capitalism." This situation has not changed in the twentieth century.

The only way to eliminate not only these injustices but their causes, is through the socialist revolution, by which the workers will take control of the political and economic structure of Quebec into their own hands.

To wipe out all oppression and injustice, we must destroy the capitalist order in Quebec, which is responsible for our national oppression. We must nationalize the foreign monopolies, those parasites on our resources and labor power; we must establish an independent Quebec under the leadership of the working class, the only class which has the power to do this, and the only class which has a fundamental interest in doing so.

A Quebecois workers' government will establish French as the only language at all levels — having abolished the monopolies which imposed their rules and language, the workers will have every interest in developing as a nation. Our economic wealth will be used to promote the development of our culture and language, by furnishing the technical basis for a technology and culture which assure strong links between Quebec and the French-speaking world.

Unemployment will disappear, pollution will be abolished, thousands of houses, schools, and hospitals will be built. Quebec's great wealth will be used to meet the needs of our people, rather than to enrich foreign capitalists.

The independence of Quebec means a Quebec independent of all foreign domination — that is, an independent and socialist Quebec.



The convention comes to an end with the singing of the Internationale, traditional song of the revolutionary movement.

1971 CROSS CANADA

Canada's revolutionary past... ...and future

by Kate Alderdice
Conference Co-ordinator

It doesn't matter if you walk, drive, bicycle or hitch-hike. Just be in Waterloo, Ontario, on Friday August 20.

The University of Waterloo campus has been booked for the first Cross-Canada Socialist Educational Conference. Not since the collapse of the Canadian Union of Students has a radical conference of this scope been planned.

Five days of discussions, lectures, workshops, parties, films and much more. The theme of the conference is "Canada's revolutionary past and future." How did we get where we are now? Where do we go from here? How can Canadians regain control of their country?

How do we make a revolution?

Active preparation for the conference is now going on across the country. In particular, everyone planning to attend the conference is urged to undertake research projects during this unemployment summer. In order to change this country, we have to understand it thoroughly. We need to know our real history, not the slop we get in school. We need to know the class structure of Canada, the status of women, the role of regional disparities, who controls the compuses, and much much more. Do your research on as large or as small a topic as you wish, and come to Waterloo to share what you've learned. Or just come to learn.

Each of the five days will begin with a major talk by a Canadian or Quebecois socialist. Topics include Women's Liberation, The Rise of the Student Movement, Quebec and the Canadian

Revolution, and Building a Revolutionary Movement.

Each afternoon will be devoted to workshops and other small group sessions on topics ranging from the Suffragist movement to Marxist Economics. Evenings will be reserved for special events — guest speakers, parties, and so on. And there will be time for swimming, informal discussion, and just lying around in the sun.

Cost of the conference will be about \$35 for each participant.

Among the speakers definitely confirmed are the following:

EVELYN REED, author of "Problems of Women's Liberation", speaking on "Have Women Always Been the Second Sex?"

GEORGE NOVACK, internationally-known socialist scholar, author of the recently-published book "Democracy and Revolution", speaking on "The Meaning of Life: A Marxist Analysis".

ROSS DOWSON, long-time Canadian socialist leader, Executive Secretary, League for Socialist Action-Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière, speaking on "Fifty Years: Building a Revolutionary Party in Canada."

A special session, featuring Linda Meissenheimer, president of Simon Fraser University Student Council, will discuss plans for the student movement this fall.

Posters, stickers, newsletters and brochures on the conference are available from the Conference Co-ordinating Committee, 334 Queen Street West, Toronto.

See you in Waterloo.

Evelyn Reed



George Novack

Ross Dowson



Linda Meissenheimer

CONFERENCE
AUG. 20-25
UNIVERSITY OF
WATERLOO

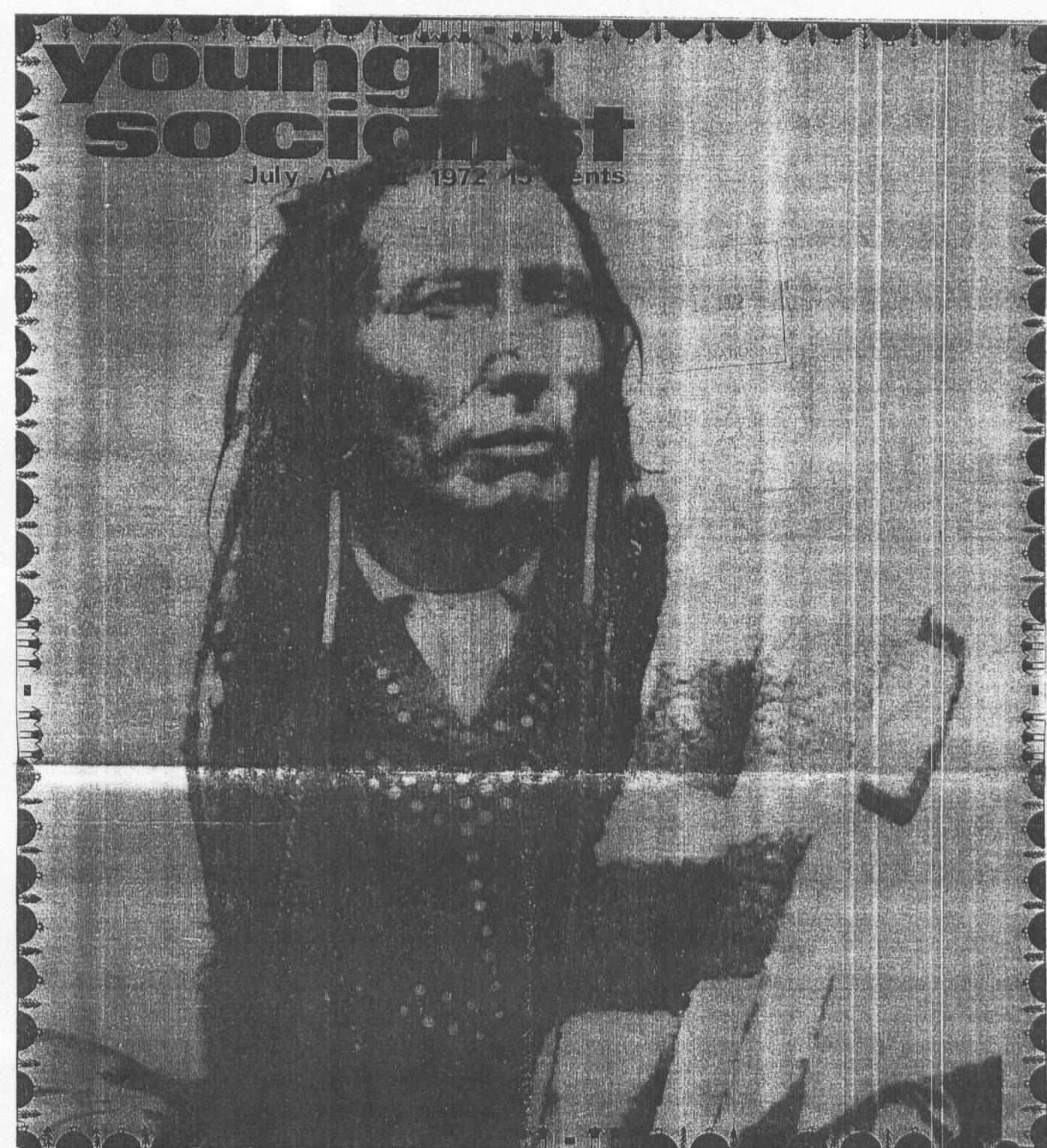


young socialist

Nov.-Dec. 1971 15 cents



Students tell U.S.: "Get Out!"



YOUNG SOCIALIST

July - August 1972 15 cents

Poundmaker 1842-1886, Cree revolutionary

Native revolt in 1900/4

Vietnamese struggle in peril/10

Quebec teachers' manifesto/6

Canadian revolutionists meet

by DICK FIDLER

The convention of the League for Socialist Action / Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière met in Toronto over Easter weekend, April 20-23. It was the largest policy convention in the history of the Canadian Trotskyist movement. Of the more than 300 persons who registered, 53 were delegates elected from 12 branches in cities from Vancouver to Montreal, and 34 were alternate delegates. In addition, 29 members of the outgoing Central Committee attended as consultative delegates.

There were over 50 guests and observers from other countries.

The LSA/LSO is the Canadian section of the Fourth International, the world party of socialist revolution founded by Leon Trotsky in 1938.

The League is working to assemble the cadres of the future mass revolutionary party that alone can lead the struggles of the Canadian working class to victory through the winning of state power and the socialist transformation of society on an international scale. Members of the League are active in all aspects of the class struggle in Canada, playing a leading role in the women's liberation movement, the anti-war movement, student struggles, building the left wing of the New Democratic Party and class struggle caucuses of militants in the trade unions, intervening in the Quebecois nationalist movement, etc. Their concerns were reflected in the colorful banners that adorned the convention hall in the King Edward Sheraton Hotel: "U.S. Out of Southeast Asia," "Pour Un Québec Independant et Socialiste," "Abortion: A Woman's Right to Choose," "Defend Latin-American Political Prisoners" and "Vive la Quatrième Internationale."

The credentials committee reported that 19 delegates were active in the NDP, 13 in women's liberation (almost 40 percent of the delegates were women), 10 were active mainly on campus, nine in antiwar work, five (not including teachers) in trade union work. Sixteen delegates were also members of the Young Socialists / Ligue des Jeunes Socialistes, which is in political solidarity with the LSA/LSO.

While discussing these areas of the League's work, and setting plans to expand its intervention in them, this convention focussed on defining and clarifying the position of the Canadian Trotskyist movement on a number of important questions, including the current internal discussion in the Fourth International, and an assessment of the

nature of the current radicalization and the challenges it poses for Canadian revolutionists.

On many key questions, minority views in opposition to those of the majority of the leadership were expressed.

DEMOCRATIC DISCUSSION

The convention was preceded by the longest, most thoroughly documented discussion period in the history of the Canadian section. In the space of 11 months, some 58 editions of the English-language Internal Discussion Bulletin were published, containing 91 literary contributions — for a total of 1,665 pages of typewritten material and approximately 675,000 words. Of this, about half was comprised of minority views in opposition to the line resolutions submitted by the Political Committee (PC). Organized minorities fully exercised their rights to tour party branches to present their views to the membership.

In addition, sixteen editions of the French-language internal bulletin were published, with contributions totaling some 160,000 words.

A sophisticated electronic system of simultaneous translation ensured that all convention proceedings were conducted in both languages.

The convention opened with a report on the world Trotskyist movement, presented by Art Young, organizational secretary, for the Political Committee. He reported on the progress of the current discussions within the Fourth International preparatory to the Fourth World Congress since Reunification. Pointing to the work of the national sections in a number of countries, the report mentioned in particular the intervention of the Ligue Communiste in the recent student upsurge in France. He hailed the breakthrough in Argentina of the Trotskyist Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST — Socialist Workers party). Illegal and underground only two years ago, the cadres of the present PST have used their intervention in the recent national elections under the Lanusse military dictatorship to project a revolutionary class struggle program, and to register an impressive increase in the party's membership, organization, and influence in the Argentine working class.

DETENTE ANALYZED

The Political Report, presented by Dick Fidler for the Political Committee, began with a survey of the international conjuncture. The report pointed to a turn in the world

political situation marked by Nixon's visits to Moscow and Peking, the resulting "detente" between imperialism and the workers states, and the success of this combination of imperialists and Stalinist bureaucrats in forcing the Vietnamese revolution to yield major concessions in its liberation struggle.

Not the least of these concessions is the provision in the Accords for a supervisory force with Canadian participation to oversee the ceasefire, a clear violation of the Vietnamese peoples' right of self-determination. The convention reaffirmed the commitment of Canadian Trotskyists to campaign for an immediate end to imperialist intervention in Southeast Asia, for withdrawal of Canadian forces and an end to Canada's complicity in the war.

"Imperialism has gained a breathing space" with the detente, the report noted. But while serious setbacks have been experienced in some sectors, particularly the colonial revolution, there have been advances elsewhere.

"These developments belie any schema of general reversal of the underlying trends of the past decade, one of general radicalization and ferment. There are elements of profound instability in the present situation, not least the continuing dilemma of U.S. and world imperialism in Southeast Asia, and — most significant — the continued thrust forward and deepening of the class struggle in the main imperialist centers."

The detente, the resulting easing of the atmosphere of world political crisis focussed for years on the Vietnam war, has produced a certain downturn in mass mobilizations in the student sector, reinforcing tendencies toward both opportunism and ultraleftism.

"What we are witnessing today," states the resolution adopted by the delegates, "is the reaffirmation of the main historical contradiction of our epoch, the crisis of revolutionary leadership" — manifested in the counterrevolutionary role of Stalinism, of both Mao and Brezhnev varieties (e.g. Indochina, Indian subcontinent), the bankruptcy of Guevarism and the guerrilla war strategy (Bolivia, Argentina, Uruguay), the continuing trend of the social-democratic and labor-reformist leaderships in the imperialist countries toward integration into the apparatus of the bourgeois state through parliamentary and governmental experience.

labor
Challenge

#18 May 1973

CONGRES 1973 CONVENTION

League for Socialist Action Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière

Special Feature

photo by Macinnis

P.2

The appearance of a "new vanguard layer of young radicals and revolutionary-minded youth, the advanced elements emerging from the developing social struggles," poses unique and unprecedented opportunities for the construction of mass revolutionary parties. The main challenge before the cadres of the Fourth International is to win and assimilate these youth, and train them in the method and strategy of the Transitional Program.

GROWING CLASS STRUGGLE

The report pointed to the increasing difficulties facing Canadian capitalism in a world characterized by heightened inter-imperialist rivalry. Canada is one of the largest imperialist powers without guaranteed access to foreign markets through membership in a common market structure. Its "special relationship" with U.S. capitalism — the result of the continental market and the high degree of interpenetration of capital between the two countries — is being undermined by growing U.S. protectionism. Whether it moves toward closer "integration" in the American market, or toward attempts to diversify foreign trade and investment, the Canadian bourgeoisie must step up the competitive capacity of Canadian manufacturing industries, that is, increase the rate of exploitation of Canadian workers. A general increase in the tempo and depth of the class struggle can be anticipated in the next period.

The main part of the political report analyzed the nature of the new radicalization of recent years, and how revolutionists can intervene in the mass movements to develop them along the road of anticapitalist

struggle. (See separate article, this issue.)

AGAINST CANADIAN NATIONALISM

A major discussion has taken place in the League in recent months over the development of the mass nationalist sentiment in English Canada, much of it directed against the growing weight and influence of U.S. capital in the Canadian economy.

Most political tendencies in the left have attempted to identify with this sentiment, and even base their politics on it, in the belief that Canadian nationalism is an essentially progressive force. The Communist party has long made "Canadian independence" its vocation. The New Democratic Party has increasingly campaigned in defense of Canadian sovereignty. The NDP's left wing "Waffle" grouping split in Ontario last year; a large section, holding that the NDP's nationalism was insufficient, moved out of the party to set up a "Movement for an Independent Socialist Canada," convinced that a Canadian "independentist" movement would bring socialism quicker than any other strategy. Other groupings, such as the Maoist Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) and Canadian Liberation Movement, have seen Canadian nationalism as central to their politics.

This was the most lively debate of the league's pre-convention period. No fewer than 28 written contributions on this theme were reproduced and circulated in English and French to members across the country. Debates on the topic were organized in all the branches, and representatives of the two main contending positions

toured LSA/LSO branches from Montreal to Vancouver to defend their views.

The convention adopted by a vote of 39 to 5 (with 8 abstentions) the PC report presented by John Riddell, LSA/LSO executive secretary, and the resolution it was based on, "Canada and the Crisis of World Imperialism."

This resolution denied that Canada has become a colony of U.S. imperialism, or that its existence as an independent capitalist state has been ended through assimilation into the USA. It reaffirmed Canada's character as an imperialist country, ruled by the Canadian bourgeoisie.

As for Canadian nationalism — including support for Canadian independence, or for the "freeing" of Canada from "U.S. domination" — the resolution rejected any concept that this sentiment could be viewed as progressive, or as having an anti-capitalist dynamic.

In Quebec, nationalist consciousness has served to fuel the struggle against national oppression. But English Canada, far from being an oppressed nation like Quebec, is an imperialist power, and the oppressor of Quebec. Nationalism in English Canada is fundamentally an instrument of bourgeois rule, promoting class collaboration and the unity of the Canadian state.

The resolution recognized the existence of widespread nationalist conceptions among Canadian workers. Protests against the

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LSA / LSO convention

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operations of capitalism, for example against a plant closure by a U.S. corporation, often take a nationalist form. The task of revolutionists is not to identify with this distorted nationalist form. They must advance a program linking with the real class issues at stake, and leading forward to anti-capitalist conclusions, while combatting nationalist illusions.

"Canada and the Crisis of World Imperialism" also evaluated the previous resolution of the LSA-LSO on this topic, "Canada-U.S. Relations," adopted by the 1968 convention. A first approximation in the analysis of a new and complex phenomenon, the 1968 resolution restated the imperialist character of the Canadian ruling class, its control of the Canadian state, and the reactionary character of Canadian nationalism.

It proved in error, however, in a central respect. It identified anti-U.S. feeling in Canada as an "anti-imperialist sentiment" of a progressive character. Experience showed this concept to be ambiguous and misleading, and that anti-U.S. sentiment contained an increasing element of Canadian nationalist patriotism.

A minority tendency that was formed primarily around this question of Canadian nationalism, advanced the view that there was a "new nationalism" with an essentially anticapitalist thrust — a unique phenomenon based on popular reaction against the "domination" of important sectors of the Canadian economy by U.S. capital. This tendency's views were rejected by the delegates in a vote of 5 for, 48 against, 0 abstentions.

Other key debates were those on the Quebec national liberation struggle and women's liberation, both major areas of intervention for the Trotskyist movement. (See articles, this issue)

The Quebec report noted that in the summer of 1972, a grouping led by Michel Mill split from the Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière and the Fourth International. They have since set themselves up as the Groupe Marxiste Révolutionnaire (GMR — Revolutionary Marxist Group). Several Quebec delegates noted that in recent labor and student struggles, the GMR had tail-ended the bureaucratic and conservative elements in the trade union and student leadership. In a united front

committee to defend the jailed labor leaders, GMR leaders had opposed the proposal for a May Day mass trade union demonstration, claiming it was "premature." In the recent student strike at the Université du Québec à Montréal, the GMR had argued for a return to classes against the proposals of the Ligue des Jeunes Socialistes representative in the strike leadership to continue the strike.

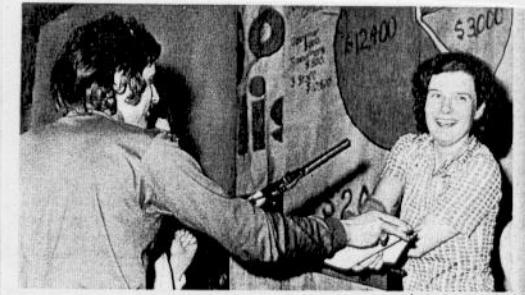
TENDENCIES FORMED

All reports were adopted by a large majority of at least 75 percent of the delegates.

The convention was characterized by the fullest democracy in its procedures.

In addition to the United Tendency, which organized around the question of Canadian nationalism, with just under 10 percent of delegate support, there was another minority grouping, the Revolutionary Communist Tendency (RCT), supported by eight delegates. (Delegates are chosen by proportional representation in the branches.) Organized on a platform that represented a wide range of differences with the PC majority, the RCT presented counterposed positions under all the major political reports. (To permit the fullest, most effective presentation of the RCT's views, the convention suspended the normal rules of procedure on three reports to allow leading spokespersons of the RCT who were not delegates to present counter-reports.)

The RCT argued that some of the major areas of intervention of the LSA / LSO and the Young Socialists — such as women's liberation, the student movement, the Québécois nationalist movement — are "peripheral" to the class struggle, and urged that the League begin an immediate, aggressive turn toward "implantation" in the trade unions. Insofar as revolutionary cadres intervened in "peripheral" struggles like women's liberation, it should be as an essentially propagandist left wing. The League should not attempt to lead struggles for reforms, such as the campaign for abortion law repeal, but should direct these "peripheral" movements toward the organized working class. In student struggles, for instance, the revolutionaries should intervene primarily around themes like solidarity with workers' struggles and with the colonial



JOAN NEWBIGGING, Vancouver organizer of LSA and member of convention's presiding committee, chaired special sessions at which \$6,000 was raised toward expansion of League's activities.

revolution.

To the majority's projection of building broad class struggle caucuses in the unions and NDP around the key radicalizing issues of the day, the RCT comrades counterposed the building of organizations and "fronts" of League sympathizers and other revolutionaries within the traditional organizations of the working class. Those fronts or circles would act as a "transmission belt" for revolutionary ideas to the mass movement.

In Quebec, the Revolutionary Communist Tendency held that the struggle for independence and against national oppression can be "coopted" by the national bourgeoisie, and that revolutionists should therefore support independence only through an "explicitly anticapitalist program." While the majority held that as Québécois workers develop political class consciousness, they are more inclined to take up the struggle against national oppression, the RCT argued that nationalist demands (such as defence of the French language) become subordinated to class demands.

On Canadian nationalism, the RCT denounced the majority for what it termed their "ultraleft-abstract calls of 'workers of the world unite.'" It held that Canadian nationalism is mainly confined to the liberal petty-bourgeoisie, that the working class is "relatively indifferent" to it, that the bourgeoisie has little use for nationalism "because its main thrust is directed against the project to which the bourgeoisie is most committed, the further integration of the North American economy," and that if the bourgeoisie were to promote nationalism at some time in the future, its clearly reactionary use as a defence of the existing order would be unlikely to win it mass support.

The RCT's views were rejected by a large majority of the delegates.

At the end of the convention, the

Majority Tendency, which had been organized in support of the positions of the PC majority on Canadian nationalism and the discussion in the Fourth International, announced its dissolution. The United Tendency did likewise. The Revolutionary Communist Tendency declared it would continue to exist as an organized tendency.

LEADERSHIP ELECTED

The convention concluded with the election of a new Central Committee (CC) and Control Commission.

The slate of CC members proposed by the nominating commission was adopted unanimously by the delegates. The new Central Committee has 35 members, including 14 women. Five are members of the RCT, three were previously members of the United Tendency.

A post-convention plenary meeting of the CC elected the following as officers: Ross Dowson, chairman; John Riddell, executive secretary, and Art Young, organizational secretary.

This convention marked a significant broadening of the leadership cadre of the Canadian Trotskyist movement, reflecting the rapid political development of the new young forces recruited to revolutionary Marxism out of the current radicalization. The majority of the delegates — 39 out of the 53 — were between the ages of 22 and 30. For 15 of them, it was their first convention; for another 23, only their second.

Of the 29 consultative delegates on the outgoing Central Committee, almost all had been in the movement for at least five years and a few for up to 35 years or more. Thus the leading cadre of the Canadian section encompasses a wide range of experience in the class struggle.

While the League orients strongly to the youth radicalization, its membership is heavily working class in composition. Of the delegates, 37 were workers, including six teachers and nine unemployed. Six were in trade unions. Nine were students, six work full time on the movement staff, and one was a farmer.

One of the highlights of the con-

International greetings

Official greetings were sent to the LSA/ LSO convention from many sections and sympathizing organizations of the Fourth International. In addition, the delegates were addressed by Alain Krivine, a leader of the Ligue Communiste, and former presidential candidate in France who represented the United Secretariat of the Fourth International; Joseph Hansen, representing the U.S. Socialist Workers Party (SWP); and a leader of the Swedish Trotskyist organization, Revolutionara Marxisters Forbund (RMF — League of Revolutionary Marxists).

The convention voted to send official greetings to the congress of the British section, the International Marxist Group, meeting that same weekend; to Peng Shu-tse and Chen Pi-lan, founders of the Chinese Communist party and the Fourth International (who had also sent greetings to the convention); and to James P. Cannon, founder of the SWP.

The internationalism of the delegates was also expressed in

the sale at the convention of 82 subscriptions to Intercontinental Press, the international revolutionary Marxist weekly news magazine. An impressive display in the foyer exhibited samples of the Trotskyist press from around the world.



photo by MacInnis

ALAIN KRIVINE addressed convention on behalf of United Secretariat of the Fourth International.

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vention was a special session to launch an expansion fund to build up certain aspects of the League's internal operations. To start if off right, delegates raised some \$6,000 from among themselves, as well as five typewriters, an automobile — and one delegate even donated a private airplane!

In a separate report on literature sales, it was reported that sales of Trotskyist literature in bookstores and on campuses by Crescent Publications, the Canadian distributors for Pathfinder Books, were up 100 percent in 1972 over the year before, and already this year are running 50 percent ahead of last year — an indication of the widespread and growing interest in Trotskyist views among the young radicals today.

LSA/LSO INTERNAL

INFORMATION BULLETIN

Vol. 2, No. 1 January 1974

MATERIAL FROM THE JANUARY 1974 PLENUM -- I

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The material in this bulletin is published by the Political Committee for the information of members of the League for Socialist Action/Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière, Canadian section of the Fourth International.

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The Central Committee of the LSA/LSO met in plenary session January 1-3 to discuss the work of the movement and lay plans for the next period. Among the items the CC discussed were Quebec, Women's Liberation, and the Young Socialists/Ligue des Jeunes Socialistes. A report on our tasks and the coming campaigns of the movement was also discussed and adopted.

In addition, two sessions of the plenum dealt with the question of our attitude to the NDP and our work in it.

The Political Committee has decided to publish material from the NDP discussion for the information of LSA/LSO members. The two reports presented by the Political Committee, a document of the Labor Party Tendency distributed to the plenum, and some of the contributions made during the discussion of these items will appear in forthcoming information bulletins.

The Art Young and Ross Dowsen interventions printed here took place on the second evening of the plenum, towards the end of the discussion on the second PC report on the NDP. One part of the exchange concerns the text of the LPT document, which the LPT itself had mimeographed and collated for the plenum. The copy that most members of the Central Committee received contained the following concluding paragraph:

"Although grave damage has been done to our orientation, there is still time to call a halt. The red lights are flashing. The comrades who have united in the Labor Party Tendency are alarmed at this process of abandonment of our NDP orientation, the most important acquisition of Canadian Trotskyism, an orientation that remains the fundamental cornerstone of non-sectarian revolutionary politics. We must note that the direction that the LSA/LSO is moving in on this most important question unleashes a certain dynamic -- one which will necessarily lead to a qualitative transformation of the LSA/LSO."

However, some members of the Central Committee received a copy of the document containing two back pages, slightly different from each other. The concluding paragraph of the alternate back page was substantially the same as the one cited above, with an additional sentence at the end:

"If the LSA/LSO does not halt this process of abandonment of our NDP orientation, it will cease to be Trotskyist."

APPEAL FOR A POLITICAL DISCUSSION OF THE REAL ISSUES

Plenum contribution by Art Young

Comrades, I want to step back for a moment from the report and the discussion before us and raise what I think is a more serious question. Some very ominous things have been said in this discussion and have been written in the Labor Party Tendency documentation. These threaten our ability to have a political discussion of the disputed issues.

Before doing that, however, I want to respond to Comrade Ross's remarks yesterday about the convention. If I understood him correctly, Ross said that it was a faction convention, designed to fight the Maitan-Mandel-Frank grouping. And that he didn't want to raise his differences there, because he was a member of the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction.

This is a serious error on two counts. First, what we had was a convention of the Canadian section, not of a faction. It debated and decided the position of the section on the key international questions. It did so after a long discussion and debate in the branches hearing all the points of view. The Revolutionary Communist Tendency (RCT) participated fully in the debate until it walked out of the organization.

The split of the RCT did not transform the LSA/LSO into a faction. That may be the stand of the secret faction in the International. It is not our stand. Not only were the former RCTers absent from our convention but the IEC Majority Tendency representatives in North America decided to boycott it. We, on the other hand, sought maximum attendance and participation at our convention and we were pleased to have good international representation, despite the IEC Majority Tendency's non-participation.

Secondly, on differences within the Leninist-Trotskyist Faction (LTF), Ross misrepresented the character and functioning of the LTF when he said he didn't want to raise his differences with other LTF members on the floor of the convention. Now, I am a member of the LTF steering committee. The LTF does not, repeat not, suppress differences among its members. Where these exist, they are openly presented before the Fourth International -- for example, the differences separating comrades within the LTF on the question of Canadian nationalism which have been thoroughly documented and are available to the world movement.

The discipline of the LTF applies only to the achievement of the goals set out in the statement establishing the faction, and to no other matter.

Now I come to my main concern. A document has been submitted to the Political Committee by the Labor Party Tendency (LPT), and the leadership discussion of this document has begun here today

and yesterday. This is very good and a step forward. But in the process, some things have been said which pose a real danger to our movement.

Let's refer first of all to some comments that Comrade Ross made only a few minutes ago from this podium. Now Ross spoke quickly and I may not have gotten his words exactly, but the sense of them was that in the last year and a half he has found it more and more difficult, almost impossible to discuss with other comrades. There's a poisonous atmosphere here, he said.

The movement doesn't know how to discuss. We don't know how to discuss in our movement now, he stated. And then a couple of minutes later in his contribution, he declared: "I can't see any perspective for a movement that doesn't know how to discuss."

*Ross accused
rejecting
mouvmt*

That suggests, comrades, that he doesn't see any perspective for our movement. Now I accept in advance that this was probably a verbal slip on Ross's part and that that was not what he meant to imply. But I think the fact that such a slip could occur should be an ominous warning to us of the danger of factional heat in this discussion at the very moment when the discussion has only begun -- that is, when we have only just received the document of the LPT. It also has to be seen in the context of some other ominous signs which I want to point out.

For example, yesterday in Ross's closing remarks he said (and I think I am quoting exactly), "The evidence of this movement degenerating into a sectarian movement is very clear." This was not an off-the-cuff remark, as the previous comments I referred to were; Ross indicated that his choice of the word "degenerating" was a considered and thought-out one. Comrades, that word has a clear meaning and history in our movement. It's the term the RCT used at our April convention to describe the League. It's also the word that the Mill group used previously in Quebec to describe the LSO. This gave rise to an important exchange on the convention floor, which we've printed in the Internal Information Bulletin no. 4, and which comrades can read.

*Ross says
LSA is
degenerating*

A "degenerating" movement -- we know what that means for us. And when Comrade Gary challenged Comrade Ross yesterday on this point, Ross did not withdraw his ominous use of the word.

Now let's pass to the written record.

The same concept is suggested, although not spelled out, in the last sentence of the official position of the LPT, that is in their document submitted to the Political Committee, and distributed to this Plenum. If you look at the last sentence, it reads:

"We must note that the direction that the LSA/LSO is moving in on this most important question unleashes a certain dynamic -- one which will necessarily lead to a qualitative transformation of the LSA/LSO."

Now what does that mean: "Qualitative transformation"? It suggests that this organization is headed towards becoming qualitatively transformed away from a Trotskyist organization to one which is no longer Trotskyist. Then what would it be? Not the nucleus of the revolutionary party that we are all giving our lives to build. We would have to set out and give our lives to build something else -- that is the suggestion of those words in that document, if I read them accurately.

Some members of the Central Committee received a version of this document which is a bit more explicit. Comrade Lis Angus showed me her copy of the LPT document. By mistake, hers contained two copies of the last page. But the significant thing is that the two back pages are different.

Most comrades' versions ends with the sentence I just read. But Lis's version goes on. This is how it reads: "...a certain dynamic -- one which will necessarily lead to a qualitative transformation of the LSA/LSO." And then it continues, "If the LSA/LSO does not halt this process of abandonment of our NDP orientation, it will cease to be Trotskyist."

Ross Dowson (from the floor): "I hold to that view."

Dick Fidler (from the floor): "Then why did you change it?"

Ross Dowson: "Why? A simple problem of space."

Chair: "Order, order!!"

Art Young: Well, I would then like Comrade Ross to take the floor after I have finished speaking and explain to us what he sees to be the implication of that view that if the movement does not change its position on the NDP, a position that's been adopted by a previous convention, that it will cease to be trotskyist. Is that a way to begin a discussion; to convince the movement? When is the Labor Party Tendency going to decide that that point has been reached? That's the question that it poses. Is it tomorrow? Or a year from now? Or two days from now that the LPT is going to decide that it can't discuss anymore in the movement and the point of qualitative change has been reached -- or rather the point of qualitative no-change, since what transforms the movement is its refusal to change its policy? If that is Comrade Ross's view, we should record that, and if it is the view of the LPT, that it was simply taken off for space reasons, although the rest of the page is blank, Comrade Ross --

Ross Dowson: "You're real lawyers!"

Other: "Lawyers?!"

Chair: "Order."

Art Young: Well, it is very useful to have comrades way what they mean. I began speaking on the assumption that these were misunderstandings. But obviously that's mistaken. Let me

continue in any case with what I originally intended to say.

The implication of that last paragraph is also that this is a very rapid process. The "red lights" are all "flashing". Comrade Ross has turned the analogy on us. The red lights are all flashing; there is still time to call a halt, the document says, but the implication is that there is very little time left.

Now I think such statements are a grave, grave danger to the movement. They're certainly barriers in the path of a clear and fraternal discussion which Comrade Ross pounded this very podium a few minutes ago to insist that we had to have. The submission of a document represented a step towards this.

But you see, you can't begin a discussion by telling the other comrades who don't agree with you, that if they don't rapidly change their view, they will cease to be Trotskyist.

Now, even after what Comrade Ross just said, I want to express the hope that the statements he's made yesterday, earlier today and in this exchange, as well as the implication of the document of the LPT, are simply ill-considered and irresponsible statements, factional excesses which the comrades are going to withdraw in the course of the discussion. I hope that leaders of the discussion on both sides, like Comrade Ross, are going to exercise their moral authority to rein in any of their supporters who make such suggestions. I for my part will certainly do so.

Having said that, let me go on to another danger sign. That is the growing gulf between LPTers and the rest of the movement in the sphere of activity.

Let me just reiterate a few facts.

Comrade Ross decided at the end of the summer that he could no longer form part of the movement's full-time staff. Leading comrades who tried to dissuade him from this course were unable to do so. That was a danger sign.

Comrade GD, the only member of the LPT elected to the Metro Toronto Executive Committee, recently resigned from the body. Other MEC comrades were unable to dissuade him from this course. This is another danger sign. There are other signs of the breakdown of collaboration between leaders of the LPT and other leaders of the movement.

Just a few days ago, members of the LPT were almost totally absent from our convention. Only a few attended, and only for short periods. And yet this convention was a vitally important experience for the whole movement. Here we are in the front lines of the battle in the International. Part of the IEC Majority Tendency have split the section, and are scheming against it.

The convention discussed its political positions, and how to respond to these attacks. But the LPT members were not there.

Of course there were reasons. Ross explains that he and others were tied up producing the document. Other LPT members were on holiday. And of course we accept that comrades need to take holidays. But when the members of the LPT are unable to reorganize their holidays or to reschedule their tendency work, so as to attend a convention of the section, that reflects an error of judgment -- it shows that the comrades did not think our convention was very important.

Half the Vancouver branch travelled 3,000 miles to come to this convention. Many of these comrades used up not only money but also their vacation time to get there. The turnout from other areas was similar.

The LPT's absence from the convention is another reflection of the dangerous tendency in the past period for these comrades to be less and less involved in party work, particularly on the leadership level. This is a situation we must collectively undertake to reverse.

What is the explanation for this situation? We must be aware of the problems caused by the way in which this discussion has developed. For some three months the NDP discussion has taken place only within the Labor Party Tendency. The Political Committee was not involved in the discussion and was not able to ascertain the views of the LPT. The LPT in turn deprived itself of the possibility to test out the views of the Political Committee. Such a hothouse discussion breeds errors of political judgment.

The Political Committee commented on October 12, 1973 on the problems posed by the way in which the LPT had been constituted. It said in this respect:

"A dangerous situation can arise if a group of comrades begin private discussion where they develop their criticisms of the leadership without introducing their views into the movement's leading bodies. The dangers of such a situation were described in the 1968 resolution on our organizational principles:

"Concentration on private discussions on the fringe of the movement tends to give comrades involved a one-sided view, lines them up quickly, and prejudices their thinking, before they have heard the open party debate, and warps their capacity for objective political judgment. Such conduct arises from and tends to develop into personal and unprincipled clique politics in the party which must be mercilessly fought against."

(Internal Information Bulletin, Vol. 1,
No. 1, October, 1973)

The alarming statements of the LPT and of Comrade Ross show that the Political Committee pointed to a very real danger. Private discussions did indeed breed "one-sided judgment," "prejudiced thinking." It did indeed "warp the capacity for objective political judgment." That's how to explain the LPT's ominous and dangerous misestimation of the basic nature of the LSA/LSO.

The October statement of the PC made two proposals to the LPT. It should constitute itself on declared political positions, and it should present its views to the leadership. Now, two and a half months later, the LPT has at last documented its views, and presented them to the leadership. We welcome this. This should now be an occasion for a turn in the discussion, and a change in the tone that we've seen here and in the document... It should be the occasion for the LPT to reintegrate itself into the party debate, and into the work and thinking of the party. It should permit the discussion to follow a healthy course, to enable the LPT to reconsider its hasty judgment of the rapidly approaching "qualitative change" in the LSA/LSO which will make it "non-Trotskyist."

I think that we are called upon, both the comrades who are leading the LPT and the rest of the leadership comrades to act very consciously and responsibly to resolve the problem. It seems to me that the way to resolve it is not to argue over what has produced this situation or what has been said from this podium, but to begin a calm, patient, rational discussion. In order to have that, we need to begin the discussion in the Political Committee so the PC comrades can clarify where we agree with the LPT and where we disagree. We may well find out we agree on more than some comrades think we do. Whatever the case, a leadership discussion is required so that the entire movement can be presented with not some imagined differences, but the real ones as clarified in the leadership discussion.

This process is going to take us some time. Ross first wrote the majority leadership on July 30 expressing his opinion that the movement's line on the NDP has been changed. But those views were only documented in the text presented to the Central Committee yesterday. That's a time span of five months. The Political Committee may need a comparable period to digest the document, discuss it, explore it, and prepare reasoned responses. Perhaps. We also have other major tasks before us. We have to defend this section against the attempt of factionalists inside the Fourth International to do maximum damage to the section in order to aid the RMG and perhaps even to try to blow up the world movement in the process. This will remain a preoccupation of the leadership in the next period, and will affect our priorities.

There has been a tremendous amount of discussion in the movement in the last year. The health of the League now requires a turn to external work for a whole period. We know well that we have real possibilities to grow and to increase our influence

-- the Ontario teachers struggle and the fight against the British Columbia government's antilabor laws are fresh in our minds. But if external work is to bear fruit, it must be led by the Political Committee. The PC would be defaulting on its responsibility to the movement if it did not make the turn to external work its first priority.

This is also the only way to decide who is right in the NDP debate. The LPT thinks that we are making crucial errors in our NDP work. It thinks the results are already clear, and becoming more so. Then it should have confidence that the further test of experience will convince the other comrades that our NDP line is wrong.

The LPT has not said that the leadership of the movement -- the Central Committee, that is, all of us here -- is bankrupt, or blind. This means that it has confidence in our ability to perceive and correct errors in time.

Let's apply the line for a while and see what it produces. Then at the proper moment we will review it and decide either to continue along the same path or to change it.

But in order for this to happen, we have to have an experience in common. If the LPT is off in the corner, threatening us with abandonment of Trotskyism, and abstaining from taking any responsibility for the leadership of this movement, if it remains less active than other comrades, then the process of discussion, resolution and correction of any errors will be made much, much more difficult.

We have to understand and approach the debate with patience. It will not be resolved very rapidly, because it is a big and complex question. The movement has a lot to do in the next while. But we all have much to learn if the discussion is conducted in the proper atmosphere. All the leading comrades, all of us, should use their moral authority to consciously seek to reduce frictions, including by encouraging the active participation of minority comrades in party work, and in the leadership of the party.

On both sides, we should do everything we can to cut across any tendency towards a "cold separation" between majority and minority comrades in the party; to remove from the discussion words like "degeneration" or phrases like "it will cease to be Trotskyist".

If we are able to do that, then it will contribute to making this a very useful, educational debate for the entire section.

On the other side, the leading comrades need to avoid being suspicious or suspicious in a flagrant way, and at the same time, they should not be afraid of making mistakes or being wrong, as well as being open to new ideas and perspectives.

United Tendency call

[*Note in RD's handwriting : « At meeting of April 11/73. We decided to not proceed with this »] (Notes throughout by Gord D: Ross Dowson & Hans, U.T. about April/73”)*

The United Tendency of the LSA/LSO calls for a return to the theory and practice regarding the New Democratic Party as expressed in the documents, “Our Orientation to the NDP: the Strategy and Tactical Application” (presented to the 1970 Convention of the LSA/LSO –note by GD) and “The NDP and the Waffle,” which was adopted by the 1971 Plenum of the LSA/LSO.

Commencing, notably, with an incorrect application of our line in the left-wing Waffle struggle against the right-wing social-democratic leadership of the Ontario NDP, the LSA has committed a series of errors in our intervention in the Ontario NDP. These errors have continued as the left forces in the ONDP declined. Though they do not flow from a false strategy on the part of our movement to the NDP and to the CCF before it, as the Revolutionary Communist Tendency alleges, these errors do constitute a pattern of false practice. These errors demonstrate a tendency to bend to both ultraleft and to right-wing pressures on our movement, pressures that have increased as the left-wing in the ONDP collapsed after the exit of the Waffle-MISC.

To begin with, the political resolution, now before the movement, dismisses the Waffle experience in its entirely as a “debacle.” It lays the blame for the Waffle’s “desertion” from the ONDP on “the disorienting effect of the wave of nationalism on the left, pulling the Waffle leadership away from a class struggle orientation.” (Political Resolution, p. 52.)

First, the P.C. majority’s evaluation is based on two self-fulfilling propositions: a) that nationalism in advanced capitalist English Canada is reactionary, and b) that to leave the NDP is to break from class politics (note by G.D.: is this answered?)

The United Tendency has presented a rounded, materialist analysis on the progressive character of this new nationalism that permeates every level of the radicalization.

The P.C. majority’s position also constitutes a mechanical and formalistic interpretation of our NDP orientation. The forces that gathered around the Waffle to build it into the broadest and most militant left formation in the whole history of the NDP and CCF, after a turbulent confrontation with the right-wing ONDP brass, moved away from the NDP. The LSA/LSO informed it that to leave the NDP was much more than abandoning a structure that reflected the present political consciousness of the Canadian working class, but that it meant in fact **deserting the class itself** – the only class that could establish socialism in Canada – that it was to betray socialism.

We made a fetish of our NDP intervention. By portraying the NDP as the **sine qua non** of revolutionary politics and leaving it as a desertion of the class, we rendered our efforts to project and recruit to the Trotskyist LSA/LSO irrelevant, as we made the chief

significance of the LSA in appealing to Waffle-MISC adherents its orientation to the NDP. Our attacks against their “nationalist deviation,” about which we suddenly became extremely avid, added to our isolation from these forces. As if to prove to them the magnitude of their error, we commenced to paint up the class significance of the NDP which they had left.

Contrary to all predictions that its nationalism would take it to the right and out of class politics, (& contrary to P.R. that no significant layer of left-wing militants broke away from the NDP –note by G.D.) the Waffle-MISC remains a powerful force and a growing one on the left. In fact, it is a powerful pole of counter-attraction to the League which we must come to grips with.

In the past months since the Waffle’s forced exit from the ONDP, our intervention in the NDP has become separated into two distinct pressures – the one in the Left Caucus, where we adapt to and seek to keep up with the ultraleft in their mechanical revelations that the NDP is indeed not a revolutionary socialist party; and on the other hand, our posture of uncritically extolling the class significance of the NDP.

The following are examples of adaptation in practice to ultraleft pressures on us:

- 1) When the Canadian government decided to join the International Commission for Supervision and Control of the Vietnam Accords, we correctly launched a campaign against it. We saw Ottawa’s action as being designed to save the interests of US and world imperialism, as a violation of the right of Vietnamese self-determination and possibly a wedge to permit a return of US forces under more favourable circumstances.

The NDP parliamentary caucus underwrote the Liberal government’s actions. But instead of launching a public protest against the Liberal government, thus showing our opposition to the NDP leadership’s treachery, or of initiating protests and an educational campaign through NDP constituency associations, leading comrades now associated with the RCT and in sympathy with forces in the Red Circle initiated actions to hold a public picket line against the NDP leadership. (This increased ultraleft colouration of the Left Caucus & constitutes a tactical error leaving us open to expulsion, etc. –note by G.D.) The Toronto LSA leadership ceded to this proposition and only corrected the situation under considerable difficulty and at the very last moment.

- 2) The Ontario NDP left caucus now composed (not surprisingly –G.D.) largely of our own forces and the Red Circle, decided to prepare a manifesto for the coming NDP federal convention. A leading comrade now in the RCT who became chairman of the drafting committee, made a verbal outline of a draft to the LSA Metro Toronto committee for consideration. While his projection was in serious violation of our traditional concept of developing a series of democratic and transitional demands around which a broad left wing could genuinely coalesce (this “manifesto” projected demands designed to polarize a revolutionary socialist

current in contest for the leadership of the NDP) – the Metro Toronto LSA leadership including the Metro organizer initially went along with this draft with only minor criticisms. This incorrect line was carried back into the Left Caucus where support was built up behind it so that the necessary correction is tending toward a showdown struggle with the ultraleft in the Left Caucus.

- 3) While it is true that the electoral opportunism of the NDP brass causes it to tone down its labor base, the October 9, 1972 issue of *Labor Challenge* echoed the line of the ultraleft Red Circle that the NDP, firmly based on organized labor, was in the process of dumping all identification with, not to speak of support for, organized labor.

“The labor plank of the Left Caucus platform,” we wrote, “is a reflection of the caucus’ concern that the party leadership wants to abandon the NDP’s traditional identification with the labor movement....” Another article in the same issue had the Manitoba government curbing the independent strength of the trade unions: “Far from curbing the independent strength of the trade unions,” we remonstrated, “the NDP must identify with organized labor Many NDP members – in particular, the socialist wing of the party – have pushed for such an explicit pro-labor position within the party.”

At the same time as we have adapted to ultraleft pressures, we have also adapted to pressures from the right.

The latter error in the application of our line can be most clearly seen in articles of a completely uncritical character appearing especially at the time of last year’s federal election campaign.

Some issues of our press at that time became little more than NDP election campaign propaganda sheets: in effect we adapted to the NDP leadership’s electoralism. The completely uncritical attitude to the leadership of the party was made all the more difficult to grasp when we recall that this election followed immediately on the heels of the forcible exit of the Waffle from the Ontario NDP.

In several subsequent issues, notably November 20, 1972 and January 22, 1973, instead of acting as advisors to the left wing against the reformist leadership, we carried material that firmly placed us in the role of advisors to the NDP leadership in their parliamentary machinations.

What is behind this disjointed application of our NDP orientation, this adaptationism to both left and right pressures? (Note by G.D.: Was the prettifying of the NDP a convoluted polemic on the Waffle?)

That this should have become an acute matter in the last several months would seem to flow out of the right wing’s assault on Waffle, its exit from the party and the left wing being considerably reduced in both numbers and influence. Without the Waffle-MISC, which now stands aside from the NDP, the left wing is now under pressures to adapt to

the right or to swing out in an ultraleft direction that threatens it with disaster.

The majority's formulation and application of our NDP orientation has become schematized, disintegrated and its dialectical unity has been broken. We no longer guide ourselves by that succinct and eminently dialectical formulation – "The NDP represents both an opening to and a barrier against, stands both on the way and athwart the way to building the revolutionary vanguard."

(end)

POLITICAL COMMITTEE PLATFORM

The Political Committee has submitted four line resolutions for discussion and for a vote at the coming convention of the LSA/LSO. These are: the Political Resolution (Bulletin #31), Canada and the Crisis of World Imperialism (Bulletin #17), Women's Liberation Resolution (Bulletin #14), and the Quebec Resolution (Bulletin #20). In addition, the Central Committee has adopted reports on the world movement at its September and January plenums, which have been submitted to the discussion bulletin. The reports on the world movement, together with the four line resolutions, constitute the general line proposed by the Political Committee for the global activity of the movement after the convention.

In the course of the pre-convention discussion, two minority tendencies have been constituted, and have put forward counter-resolutions, which propose a counter-line to the resolutions of the Political Committee. The elections of delegates will therefore be on the basis of proportional representation.

The April 7 meeting of the Political Committee considered what PC platform would most clearly present the alternative on the key and fundamental questions before us, in the voting to determine proportional representation. In drawing up its platform, it was guided by the need to achieve political clarity on the questions which have emerged as the key issues of the pre-convention discussion. The Political Committee therefore decided by majority vote on a platform composed of the following three documents:

- 1) World Movement Report, adopted by the September plenum of the Central Committee (Bulletin #11);
- 2) Political Resolution, adopted by the Political Committee (Bulletin #31);
- 3) Canada and the Crisis of World Imperialism, adopted by the January plenum of the Central Committee (Bulletin #17).

The Women's Liberation and Quebec resolutions will be presented for discussion and adoption by the convention.

The World Movement Report adopted by the January plenum of the CC has yet to be published in the internal bulletin, but will be available prior to the convention.

Comradely,

John Riddell,
for the Political Committee.

April 9, 1973.

REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST TENDENCY PLATFORM

The Revolutionary Communist Tendency submits the following documents as the content of its political platform:

- 1) Revolutionary Communist Position on Students, Bulletin #28.
- 2) Feminism or Scientific Socialism, Which Road..., Bulletin #10.
- 3) The Character and Statutes of the Fourth International, and Theses on Quebec, contained in Bulletin #3.
- 4) The Revolutionary Communist Position on Quebec, Young Socialist Bulletin #12.
- 5) Social Democracy and the LSA, Bulletin #29.
- 6) The Revolutionary Communist Position on the NDP, contained in Bulletin #26.
- 7) International Report, yet to be published.
- 8) Our Liquidation into the Ontario Waffle -- the Lessons to be Learned From It, yet to be published.
- 9) The Building of Revolutionary Parties in Capitalist Europe (Draft Theses submitted to the 10th World Congress), Int. Inf. Bull. November 1972.
- 10) In Defense of Leninism, In Defense of the Fourth International, by E. Germain, yet to be officially published.
- 11) Political Resolution (RCT), yet to be published.

The RCT also declares its support for the following documents:

- 1) Documents of the Unity Discussion with the Red Circle, Bulletin #36, pp 7-40, 46-58.
- 2) The positions of Offley and Davis contained in the Documents of the Offley-Davis appeal, Bulletin #15.
- 3) The Roots of Degeneration, Bulletin #29.
- 4) Documents on the NDP contained in Bulletin #26 (excluding R.C. position on NDP -- a contribution to theoretical discussion).

April 4, 1973.

PLATFORM OF THE UNITED TENDENCY

- 1) Support of the Leninist-Trotskyist Tendency and its platform on the tasks confronting the Fourth International.
- 2) Support of the document A New Stage in Canada-U.S. Relations - the UT's counter resolution to Canada and the Crisis of World Imperialism.

Submitted April 9, 1973

April 9, 1973

Dennis Lomas,
United Tendency

Dear Dennis, Ross & Co.

Just a short few lines to say how much we appreciated seeing Dennis in Vancouver and a few comments on recent developments.

Comrade Phil arrived Sunday and was assigned a 30-minute report on "where the debate is at" on the Canadian nationalism question. We decided not to challenge this even though it was obvious that with a little cooperation from the branch executive here (and perhaps the centre) we could have arranged Dennis's tour so that he could have given the counter-report. Most unfortunate. Nick put together some notes, but under the provocation of comrade Phil's comments really took off with a fine, strong presentation of our ideas. Ren also intervened well; I had only 5 minutes to squeeze in a few debaters' points near the end. At the end of the meeting I felt strangely satisfied that we had shaken them up a bit but I didn't get much sleep last night as I realized just where the leadership is taking us on this debate and just what a gory black hole the majority position is going to plunge the movement into.

We were afraid that Phil had a special purpose in coming out and intervening in a major way, and our fears were justified. He tried to put the debate on a factional basis. There are all kinds of very simple and obvious misrepresentations of our positions in a programmatic way to make us look ridiculous, or, more significantly, most definitely on the road to bourgeois revisionism of one kind or another.

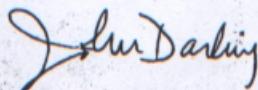
I am therefore drafting a mildly worded protest against the new tone set by Phil in the ~~xxm~~ debate which I hope the UT comrades will agree with.* We must do this to prevent all hell from breaking loose during our NIP discussion this Wednesday. The debate on the part of the comrades in general is degenerating from earlier sessions; lines are hardening in a highly polemical way, and some comrades now say they disagreed with our line on nationalism all along, etc., etc., others are lecturing the UT on the dangers of popular fronts, the evils of the UT's canadian unionism, etc., etc. Thus our replies tend to of necessity more polemical, debaters' tricks against debaters' tricks. A sure and premature sign of early degeneration of the debate. Lord knows what will happen at the convention.

I appreciate perhaps a little more now the hot and heavy situation that you find yourselves in, at the centre. Hang in there, comrades.

Wednesday night Ren will give the report based on "Theory is gray..." He is coming along nicely for the UT.

Will write again later in the week with my account of developments.

Regards,



*Nick went off to a union meeting finite best
we will have something ready for next branch meeting.

“Notes for Gord D’s presentation” – on the United Tendency's platform
“April 15/73 to Metro” (*to combined Metro branch Toronto LSA –ed.*)

(Transcribed from handwritten notes by R.D.)
(Editorial and grammatical notes)

The first point on the United Tendency's platform is support of the Lenin-Trotsky Tendency in the Fourth International.

This stands first in our 2 point platform although comrades identify our tendency with urging an orientation of the Canadian Trotskyists to working within the new nationalism which permeates the Canadian left in order to project our Marxist analysis and present our Trotskyist program of democratic and transitional demands in a way which will link to it's essentially anti-capitalist dynamic.

Solidarity with the international L-T tendency is not an incidental aspect of our platform – it is not even a second leg – it is the most important of the 2 planks of our platform. It is more important than the question of an appreciation of an orientation to this new Canadian nationalism, as important as this is if our movement is going to effectively intervene in the radicalization which all 3 tendencies recognize is permeated by it.

This point marks the UT off not only from the course the International pursued particularly in Bolivia and Argentina since the 1969 World Congress – the guerrilla war strategy – which has been disastrous.

It marks us off from the whole method (...) that the Fourth International under the majority leadership has pursued in meeting the problems of building the parties of the FI into effective forces that can become the leadership of the working class in the class struggle.

We are as the L-T tendency declaration spells out in point 4: for resumption by the leading bodies of the FI of the method outlined in the Transitional Program to solve the problems we face in bidding for the leadership of the proletariat in the class struggle, and (in point) 5 for reaffirming the basic programmatic tradition, and practices, of the FI as they stood up to the time of the Third W.C. since Reunification (Ninth WC); that is, specifically, of commitment to the Leninist strategy of building a combat party. The more revolutionary the situation, the more decisive becomes the role of such a party.

The conflicting concepts on the methodological level involve not just the guerrilla orientation as projected on a Latin American continental scale and practised in Argentina & Bolivia but differences on many other important questions – the construction of Marxist youth organizations, the historical balance sheet of entryism *sui generis* (“of a special kind,” the deep-entry liquidationist type advocated by Pablo in the FI in the 1950s, which our movement fought – ed.), (and our strategic) policies in the anti-war movement, etc., etc.

These are not matters that concern the Canadian section of the FI in its relations with our co-workers in Britain, France, Germany, etc., but right here in our own section.

We have in our section a group of comrades who have been gravely disoriented by the positions adopted by the Ninth W(orl)d C(ongress) and who are in the process of disorienting new forces in Canada particularly in Toronto who see themselves coming to Trotskyism. I am referring to the comrades organized in the RCT (*Revolutionary Communist Tendency* –ed.) The L-T tendency is not only in a struggle against mistaken policies being applied in Latin America but policies that are being advocated within our own section here in Canada and which we are for vigorous combat against.

The RCT has presented the Canadian section and our coming Convention with a 15-document platform. These documents present positions on almost every area of our work – past, present and future. This tendency while it has added new forces to its ranks over the past year, comrades some of whom for some period struggled against policies outlined in some of these documents, has in effect taken nothing away that (was) documented its previous gravely erroneous positions.

The fact that it has dropped its defence of the El Combatiente Sallustre kidnapping and its former complete endorsement of the ERP's Guevarist strategy, which has proven so disastrous, is made up for by its encompassing in its platform "In Defence of Leninism" by E. Germain (*Ernest Mandel* –ed.)

For this convention the RCT has submitted a document as a line (*major policy* –ed.) contribution which strikes out against what we have (always) considered the touchstone of class politics in Canada – the NDP – which has been the fundamental orientation of our movement for some decades.

This document disarmingly entitled "Our Liquidation into the Ontario Waffle" points up the reality of the crises of the FI which the L-T tendency has been organized to rectify and how important for the future of the Canadian section it is that the L-T tendency win in its struggle in the FI and those forces which support it in the Canadian section, and to win out in the struggle against the erroneous line of the RCT.

In our (United Tendency) tendency statement we said we stand on 2 documents: "Our Orientation to the NDP – the strategy and its tactical application," (*see on the website Home Page* –ed.) and the document "The NDP and the Waffle" adopted by the 1971 Plenum (*see in Correspondence, 1971* –ed.)

This point appeared in our declaration when we became aware that Comrade Gandall was preparing a contribution on the NDP and our general line, and we had urged the PC to present a document on this question and allocate time on the agenda for this specific purpose – but to no avail. When we came to present a short statement that could serve as an explanation for the extension of this point from our tendency statement **onto** our platform we realized that the experience had been largely an Ontario one and it would be

difficult if not impossible to work this out to the satisfaction of a tendency formed late in the day, without resources, and that was scattered across the continent.

The RCT's line document on the NDP is not entirely without merit. It attempts to deal with our recent experience in the NDP, our role in the Ontario Waffle left-wing during, and after the exit of the Waffle-MISC forces (*Movement for an Independent and Socialist Canada, as Waffle became known after its expulsion from the NDP – ed.*) It is to be hoped that it will serve to open up a serious discussion in our ranks particularly with regards to our work in the NDP since it has now been stripped clean of viable left-wing forces – which are now largely concentrated on MISC. But that is only incidental.

This RCT document is fundamentally an attack against our entire NDP orientation. In passing it should be noted that it is a counter-document to the document “Our Orientation to the NDP: the Strategy and its Tactical Application” which was a contribution in Comrade Dowson’s name to the last Congress of the International discussion on entrism *sui generis*.

This contribution attacks our fundamental orientation to the NDP, which we have characterized as the touchstone of class politics and which we have for some time had a policy of unconditional support of, and intensive fraction in, with a non-split perspective.

It does so in 2 ways: 1. it attacks some of our recent practises on our NDP orientation – on some instances on correct grounds – but practises which are related to our line only in so far as they have been a false practise of our line; 2. by presenting a completely false picture (...) of the needs, and level of consciousness, of the Canadian working class and the role of the NDP in this process (by ignoring the needs of the broad ranks of the NDP and its supporters, and presenting a false and schematic picture of the level of consciousness of the Canadian working class and the role of the NDP in this process.)

This has led them to conclude that the NDP is just “in the way, plain and simple” (“*the NDP is in the way, and on the way*” was a common formulation of LSA policy – ed.) of the LSA as (*the source of building the*) nucleus of the revolutionary vanguard, and to see the NDP a “merely an important work area in the (*working*) class in the current conjuncture.”

What underlies this attack on our NDP orientation which is an orientation to the developing politicalization of the Canadian working class is a totally different orientation away from participating (alongside the varied activities of our open LSA/LSO) in the building of a mass left wing in the NDP – to “the most militant angry young militants in the party on the basis of a hard programmatic differentiation between ourselves and the NDP leadership,” away from “the concerns” (p. 18), “the conscious orientation to building broad left wings inside the party” to “posing the full program” and “to act as a revolutionary Marxist pole.”

The full program which we are to pose inside the NDP is outlined as “positions which left social democrats could not possibly support – such as the necessity of a vanguard

party, the impossibility of the parliamentary road to socialism or the impossibility of winning a social-democratic party like the NDP to socialism.”

(p. 35 – On angry militants’) projects: (p. 22) “We will provoke splits and breakaways inside the NDP only by providing a visible credible revolutionary pole of attraction outside, not by the work of individual militants inside.” Line posed here: “a caucus largely composed of revolutionaries.”

The actions that we should take in the NDP according to the RCT are clearly to be determined by the “concerns” of the angry militants, “the most militant angry young militants,” and it is objectively in the interests of the broadest working masses and what must be done to advance the class struggle nationally and internationally.

(On the contrary), in the spirit of the Transitional Program, we start with the objective needs of the masses. We address ourselves to them and the mass organizations they consider represent them, projecting concrete demands that correspond both to the need and consciousness of the broad masses and that can move the struggle forward and thereby heighten their level of consciousness.

Not the concerns of the angry young militants but the objective needs of the workers flow (into) 2 divergent courses of action. The one advocated by RCT leads to maximalist demands and so-called militant actions like the picket against the NDP brass over their support of the International Commission (*the body in which the Canadian military monitors whitewashed the US effort in the war in Vietnam –ed.*) that presumably reflect the level of consciousness of the angry militants. In reality they are adaptations to its political ignorance and backwardness. The other is firmly based on the method of the Transitional Program which aims at mobilizing the masses in the struggle whatever their level of consciousness and moving them toward socialist revolution.

We still organize the angry young militants in actions that speak to the needs and consciousness of the masses – not the concerns of the militants. To win recruits to the LSA from the angry young militants we must convince them of the correctness of our program for the working masses – the forces that must be mobilized for the success of the revolution.

Thus in this false approach to the workers organized in the NDP that the RCT now presents for adoption of our convention we can see only amplified to a higher plane the false approach they have consistently advanced in the past period in the anti-war movement where they would dump the efforts and the demands designed to mobilize a broad mass support to the Vietnamese cause for demands that address themselves to the concerns of the angry militants.

The United Tendency is for the defence of our NDP orientation which itself is an expression of our Transitional concepts against the false method that underlies their attack on our orientation and many of the other errors of the RCT. I would now like to move onto point 2.

The NDP presents us with some problems. Our Tendency statement said we formed on #3: “We stand on the theory and practice of our movement as regards to the NDP expressed in the document “Our Orientation to the NDP: the Strategy and its Tactical Application,” the document “The NDP and the Waffle” adopted by the 1971 Plenum, and our practice with regards to the NDP and the Waffle up until the summer of 1972.”

The common opinion this expressed was: 1) that it was a mistake to have made the nationalism of the Waffle the key and divisive question in our relations with it. These opinions have been grossly misinterpreted by the Majority tendency – particularly around the contribution by Comrade Dowson “Theory is gray, but life is green” (*see this document at April 1973 –ed.*) Despite very clear identification with the 2 key documents, widespread gossip (is) that we are for (a pact) with MISC, for dumping our orientation;

2) that the theory of our movement – outlining our orientation as “the NDP as the focus of our politics – but not necessarily the centre of our activity,” “unconditional support of the NDP, intensive fraction work with a non-split perspective,” **is correct but there have been serious errors in practice in the recent period**, in our press and in our fraction and its relation to the Left Caucus. Another problem is that much of this has been a **Toronto experience** not shared by the pan-Canadian movement and therefore involved considerable history as well as interpretation – and we are a cross-Canada tendency coming to a pan-Canadian Convention.

A further motivation for that, #3, was our knowledge that our line was under attack by the RCT – we wanted to affirm our defence of that line against the RCT. It was on this basis that Comrade Dowson (and the UT) sought several months ago to have the PC prepare documentation on this and allocate special time in the convention for this – we failed.

At long last this RCT document has appeared – very late, April 10. The Tendency of course has not yet had an opportunity to fully assess this document even here in Toronto – Vancouver has not received it (as has) no other (branch); so there hasn’t even been consultation.

That is why we removed this item from our platform. So – where from here....

(notes end)

W

196 EAST 20th AVE.,
Vancouver, B.C.

April 1, 1973

*Top, Side
3/2*

Dear Ross:

Read your recent letter to Nick and myself with interest, and found the xerox copy of your contribution on the NDP question very interesting also. We had been looking forward to this even tho' we'd more or less deduced the main lines from the Tendency declaration. But I myself had been ignorant of the issues and of the details of the development of our position vis-a-vis the nationalism (canadian) of the Waffle and had been arguing that no, it wasn't because Waffle was nationalist that it broke from the NDP (in fact it didn't "break") but because it didn't see the importance of class politics. You can see that my ~~maximum~~ appreciation was pretty rudimentary. I have only read the document once hastily and must study it. Of course your comments against the "fetishism" of the PC are just, completely. Was very pleased with the detailed documentation of our position all down the line on the Waffle and the national question. . Of course I have been out of touch with not only developments in Toronto but all of English Canada, cloistered as I have been in our cosy little bookstore in Montreal, and being out here in Vancouver is like getting a large breath of fresh air. You in Toronto have had, vis-a-vis the whole Waffle development, a much more complete, richer experience, I gather, than was possible for the comrades here in Vancouver. This document will have a great educational value on the nature of our orientation to the NDP.

I enclose an article from the Sun ~~xxxxxx~~ with an excellent reportage of the meeting we held out here. The Sun was, for once, very obliging.

I receive Le Devoir here and try to follow developments in Quebec. I am however working all kinds of odd hours and am not able to concentrate "comme il faut" on the convention documentation. Before the Tendency call I had hardly even talked to Nick about the necessity of getting together to discuss how we should handle the discussion, but with the formation of the Tendency it is now formalized and we have drawn in ~~xxxx~~ other firm comrades and possibly another, (Shiela, Ren and Bob S., with another whose name I forget.) Ken H. seems interested and friendly and a large body of the branch has not expressed an opinion one way or the other, although the lines seem to be hardening. But the debate has been to date largely general and yet incidental; we need to present in an educational way the main points of your two documents on the economic assimilation of the Canadian economy into that of the US's, the material on the Canadian banks (!) and secondly, Dennis L.'s document on the Leninist approach to the national question.

This we have not yet done but this Wed. Nick will give the major Tendency report on this question and we will be having our second Tendency meeting just before to plan our intervention.

Some comrades seem to concede the point of assimilation of the Canadian economy by the US but insist that nationalism is bourgeois and will somehow be used as a tool with the agreement of US capitalism. It appears to me that the PC document Canada and the Crisis of World Imperialism is totally undercut by our and Dennis' documentation. ~~s~~ I confess that I had no idea that it could be so totally undercut. Without a doubt our documentation is a real contribution to the theoretical arsenal of Canadian trotskyism. It makes the efforts of all the others on the "left" that I have read seem like mere prologue.

and outsiders left

2.

I found the Tendency declaration excellent, ~~sometimes~~ although I could only conjecture as to the political situation in the centre which necessitated it. Further documentation will clarify that.

We had a debate on Women's Liberation document last week and I found myself defending Linda Blackwood's contribution against the most incredible criticisms, led by Joan Newbiggin and the two Bullocks. Hardly a word to say about the sweeping claims of the Schultz document, which, as one woman comrade pointed out, implicitly denies that there is more than a tactical difference between the League position and that of the RCT. (One small difficulty remains: the RCT opposes feminism and the entire revolutionary dynamic of the women's movement!).

On the Political Resolution, I led off (I gather Nick had not prepared anything, though I insist that he lead the Tendency discussion here) by pointing out that we had approached the document with the perspective of general support, ~~inasmuch~~ has the document reports on the past and the method and evaluation of the radicalisation as we had evaluated it and oriented to it up to the present; but I protested the completely inadequate, if not "dishonest" approach of the doc. on the question of Cdn. nationalism, which attempts to smother the entire question under the pillow of Stalinism and does not even report our past evaluation, as concretised by the doc. of 1968 and practised up until recent times. No evaluation of how ~~we~~ had supposedly erred. Of course, the error of the PC on the evaluation of Canadian nationalism pops up in many places throughout the doc. and the evaluation of the experience with Waffle is turned topsy-turvy, (this latter so I thought at least until confirmed by your latest doc.)

Was personally a little puzzled by Art Y. when in Van. he said that due to many factors the international question would take priority because of its importance at the convention. Quite possible, but I hope this does not mean that the question of the PC document Canada and the Crisis is ~~not~~ cut short, unless to the degree that they withdraw it from a vote.

Anyhow, you can see by this letter that due to my "holiday" and being out of circulation for a period I am pretty rusty and that my contribution to the presentation of the Tendency position will be inadequate if not enthusiastic. I doubt if I will be at the convention but certainly Nick and Ren and perhaps others will be. I am saving my pennies and plan to return to the east in the summer and perhaps spend some time in Toronto before returning to Quebec.

Have followed Liberation and the Quebec scene superficially. I agree on your assessment of the question of the labor party demand in our work in Quebec (God how the confusion was rife during the last 6 months!) I saw Gagnon's remarks and probably clipped them here. The question of our approach to nationalism and the national question as a phenomenon produced by advance decay of world imperialism interests me greatly. I may include a presentation I made on this question. Quite possible it is in error on some major points. I would be interested in ~~our~~ your opinions.

Am glad to hear that the work of the Tendency and the support for it is going well. As we expressed it here at our first meeting, our intention is to put the movement back on the tracks on this question, that is, re-establish our prior position, which, although perhaps lacking theoretical foundation in depth, pointed in the correct direction and above all was an exercise in the trotskyist method of approaching social phenomena.

Well I've used up all my reading time and have to work tonight. All future free time is reserved to studying the doc's so I can catch up to where the debate's at.

Best wishes and good luck,

John Darling

The Political Resolution for our bi-annual conventions does what a "key-note speech" does in other organisations and gatherings: it sets a tone and charts a course ahead. For a Bolshevik mouvement, it does this in a unique style, the "scientific" style. The course ahead flows from an analysis of the past period, based on the method of revolutionary marxism, Trotskyism. That's a living, developing thing.

The Political Resolution before us is by and large just this, particularly in its analysis of the world, Canadian and Quebec situation ~~fixing~~ up to the present. But there is a notable departure from this method of analysis on one of the key questions with which it deals. This is the section characteristically entitled "National Liberation or Class Struggle Politics?" --characteristically, because in itself it suggests disarmingly how the method of approaching a question used elsewhere in the document, is abandoned here.

This refusal to deal with the question of the developing sentiment of Canadian nationalism within the working class of English Canada has been justified in terms of a mis-application of Marxist theory vis-a-vis the national question and upon the erection of a theory of the supreme sovereignty of Canadian capitalism within the Canadian "national" state and of Canada as an imperialist force within its own right.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

This treasonable document challenges the United Tendency claim of supreme sovereignty of Canadian capitalism and demonstrates by its factual examination of the overwhelming economic integration of American imperialism into the fabric of Canadian capitalism, that the Canadian capitalist class, even within the citadels of its banks, has no desire to protect its national borders, and the policies of its state are profoundly "internationalist" toward the US. To the contrary, it seeks to hasten the already advanced state of economic integration of the Canadian economy with that of the most powerful imperialist nation of the world.

Well, how should the Political resolution have approached the question of a developing nationalist sentiment within an advanced capitalist country?

We see that the PC starts out not with an examination of the nationalist sentiment; what class expresses it, its forms of expression, etc., but instead ~~with~~ ^{it starts out} supposedly immutable precepts of nationalism being a priori reactionary wherever national tasks have been said to have been completed. That is, that nationalism is first and foremost the bourgeois tool used to fashion the nation-state, task No. 1 for each national bourgeoisie.

But to begin to view the question of nationalism as the traditional tool of the bourgeoisie is to miss the point of the present-day process of radicalisation. And it is to blind oneself to the fact that nationalism is appearing as a proletarian, potentially revolutionary force throughout the world, due to the delay on the historical scale of the socialist revolution on the world scale, particularly North America. As the Resolution itself says on Page 47: "Struggles for democratic rights assume great importance in this period when decadent capitalism in its death agony increasingly turns against even previous conquests of the democratic movement", etc.

The present rise of nationalism in Canada can be said to be ~~a~~ ^{literal} reaction against the willingness of the Canadian capitalist class to "sell out" whatever degree of sovereignty its national state affords it, at the expense of the welfare, living conditions and degree of control that Canadian workers enjoyed in the past. This fact also precludes ~~against~~ the possibility that proletarian Canadian nationalism is per se a force supporting the Canadian bourgeoisie. However, inasmuch as this force is ~~misknt~~ mis-led by opportunist and Stalinist currents, it becomes a blunted and frustrated force. Because of this, it is imperative that the revolutionary socialists intervene in such a

way as to direct this powerful force along the paths on which it is fundamentally headed: an anti-US big business and anti-Canadian bourgeois state complicity sentiment. Of course this nationalist sentiment is contradictory in its expression; of course there is a danger it might be mis-led and coopted as an additional lever of pressure by the Canadian bourgeoisie, or even reformist labor currents. It is the task of the Trotskyist movement to provide a revolutionary direction to this naked force.

= Lets go back to the starting point of the PC's error. It's the imposition of an array of Marxist precepts upon reality, which releases it conveniently from the obligation of analysing a political current in the working class that appear ^{might} distasteful and ugly to revolutionary socialists.

The opposition to Canadian nationalist sentiment is based on the alleged fact of completion of national tasks of the Canadian nation state.

Whether this historical task was actually ever fully completed, and under what kinds of conditions, or how this task is being unravelled by the process of economic integration into the US economy, should be examined.

But in our approach to the phenomenon of nationalism in advanced capitalist countries we never started solely from the narrow point of view of national tasks to be accomplished.

The prior experience of the Black Power movement in the US, and the precision with which our co-thinkers of the SWP approached black nationalism, were important factors enabling us to reach a correct analysis of Quebecois nationalism and to provide the theoretical basis of the slogan "For an Independent Quebec". Behind the apparent drive toward black nationhood, which if viewed in cold logic would have culminated in the creation of a distinct Black nation or region within the US, was a overwhelmingly proletarian struggle around democratic and class struggle issues. The idea of the accomplishment of the task of Black bourgeois nationhood, while always a remote political possibility, was not the essence of the drive of this ghetto nationalism.

Similarly, the nationalist sentiment of Quebecois workers is not in essence a drive towards completion of the task of establishing a bourgeois nation state.

In Quebec, the possibility in terms of geographical concentration of the nation is manifestly logical, and the major political expression of independentism is the

4. - goal. We have always correctly analysed Quebecois nationalism, inasmuch bourgeois party, the PQ. We have nevertheless correctly analysed Quebecois as it is rooted within the francophone working class to a significant nationalism, inasmuch as it is rooted within the francophone working class to a degree as having a dynamic quite distinct from the apparent major significant degree, as having a dynamic quite distinct from the apparent major direction of the struggle, bourgeois independence. We never viewed the function of nationalist sentiment formalistically as being a force destined to accomplish the national task of the independent bourgeois state, but rather in state.

We have seen vividly how the May-June labor upsurge, heavily nationalist in its overtones, was consequently more general in its demands, and that the issue was independence for the working class, not the sovereignty of the bourgeois state

of Quebec. Not sovereignty of a bourgeois state of Quebec. The tiny forces of Quebec It's true that the proletarian, that is revolutionary as distinct from the Quebec bourgeoisie, while they fear the proletarian, militant, democratic, leading edge of Quebecois nationalism, is muted and sporadic. The tiny nature of nationalism, are, however, much more securely in the drivers' seat behind the massive seat with their own political party, the Parti Quebecois, which they are betting will be capable of containing this force.

and because the mass labor party is absent, and the revolutionary left presently small.

can not satisfy ourselves support Quebec nationalism

because "it is on the agenda" in historical terms, because the Quebec nation-state has yet to be established. On the contrary, we support it because it is proletarian in origin and because its logic is to by-pass the establishment of a bourgeois nation state. The national question will not be solved in Quebec until the Quebec and North American socialist revolution create the conditions under which the Quebec workers will be able to freely decide to create a socialist republic on the continent. At no time do we impose the obligation of internationalism upon them; nor do we view their struggle in terms of "tasks" of the historical period of the rising bourgeoisie.

It is this method of approach which we must employ in evaluating the nationalist sentiments of a working class within a nation state

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which has formally "accomplished the task" of independence for its bourgeoisie. It is necessary to note that this task was never constitutionally "completed" and nationhood was achieved in a completely "cold" manner, except during the forcible periods of repression to convince Quebec to go along. Confederation was, as we know, an act calculated coolly in the boardrooms, ~~to~~ to preserve domaines from the revolutionary bourgeois republic to the South. There was no vast mobilisation of ~~the~~ plebian masses used as a battering ram to ~~force~~ smash historical barriers to establish bourgeois democratic tasks. There is no great national tradition in Canada, at least nothing greater than MacDonald's "National Policy" as a guise to foster the development of a Canadian manufacturing class.

The Canadian nationalism taking shape as an anti-US sentiment, anti-imperialism and anti-domination on the economic and cultural levels, is a nationalism without tradition, a complete break from the jingoist campaigns of the World Wars and the campaigns against Quebec, and whose origin is as an outgrowth of the present youth radicalisation, which as we ~~were~~ share the same basic root: anti-

~~imperialism, as focussed by US imperialism, as waged by US imperialism, as waged by US imperialism in Vietnam (by the Cuban revolution against US domination) by US and other imperialist interventions and by US imperialism in the name of world capitalism), by the Cuban, African and Arab revolution (waged against US domination in the name of world colonialism.)~~

In conclusion, it is false to view the resurgence of nationalism within the borders of advanced capitalist countries solely in terms of the function of the traditional historical role of this force in the epoch of rising capitalism. The Transitional Program situates us in a very different period. That the death agony of advanced imperialism should not immediately find expression in terms of overt revolutionary sentiments of a class conscious nature, but should be expressed in apparently backward terms of nationalism, in the language of the past, should not throw revolutionary socialists off the trail. Our analytical method should reveal its secret and potential to us.

April 11, 1973

The UT feels obliged to express its concern regarding usage of certain factional terms for the first time in the Vancouver branch pre-convention discussion. In the course of the Sunday April 8 meeting, which was a continuation of the discussion on the issue of Canada-US relations and the evaluation of Canadian nationalism today, and at which a PC comrade visiting the branch made a 30-minute contribution on behalf of the PC position, a significant shift in the tone of the discussion occurred. The comrade, Phil C--, in criticizing the UT position, made references to "capitulation to the pressures of bourgeois society", and to illustrate his point on what he referred to as the UT's "impressionism", he made an analogy with the Burnham-Schatchman debate, a debate which took place in 1939-40 within the SWP.

(This debate ended with a split by a petty-bourgeois faction which had abandoned the position of defence of the Soviet Union under the weight of the reaction of preparations for World War II. The entire episode has since served to educate the Trotskyist movement, through such works as Trotsky's "In Defense of Marxism" and James Cannon's "The Struggle for a Proletarian Party". The struggle was centered around a theoretical defence of dialectical materialism.)

During comrade Phil's summary, he made use of the term "pseudo-Marxists" as a thinly veiled reference to comrades of the UT, in describing elements outside the movement who defend Canadian nationalism as it is manifested today and who wish to make a serious analysis of it.

These comments have been taped, as have all other contributions in this discussion.

We would like to make the following 2 points:

1) Although it is unusual that a central office comrade should intervene not only as a participant but in leading off the debate anew on a question already under way within a branch pre-convention discussion, we have raised no objection. We asked for, and obtained, equal time for a reply, which was also our second presentation. We expected that the central office comrade would present an account of where the discussion had arrived in the centre, with an appreciation of the most recent thinking of both majority and minority comrades on the question of Canadian nationalism. However, Comrade Phil, while he brought some new material into the debate, did so in the factional manner described above. In the opinion of the UT this constitutes improper conduct from a leading comrade and sets a bad example to the Vancouver branch.

2) We want to state categorically that we of the UT will not respond in like manner. We will not be provoked or encouraged to adopt this line of characterizing prematurely the political nature of the opposition, or presenting false conclusions to a debate that is in its opening stages, that has not yet reached the convention. We will continue to the best of our ability to present our arguments in as educational and dispassionate a manner as possible. But we insist that the comrades of the Majority Tendency and those who support it do likewise.

What is at stake? Prematurely characterizing the nature of the opposition on this question as "capitulation" or as "sectarian" by either side would lead rapidly to a degeneration of the debate, a premature hardening of lines, and worse, possible permanent damage to the revolutionary organization we have sought for so many years to construct.

This matter is above all the responsibility of the leadership of our movement, and we of the UT urge it to meet these responsibilities.

Maurice Flood says that the story is that Ross worked out the line on the postal workers - it is not known what he wrote or more specifically what he said against the first article.

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~~interesting~~ our while NDP CCF line is Vabot April 12, 1973
noisnebwoob under a attack by PC majority
et Dennis and UT comrades; in bus, in the hands of alad to og A
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we enclose the declaration as we made it at the last branch meeting. We will forward a copy to the CO and I will make a rough translation and send a copy to Montreal.
abia The branch meeting discussed the NDP and went off quite well. Phil behaved himself after we read our statement at the beginning and Ren, who is a new comrade but who has had some considerable experience around the NDP in BC did a good job of presenting the main ideas of the "Theory is grey" document. In fact, the majority comrades seemed decidedly on the defensive. Nick spoke well again as did Bob Simms. I think if we are able to send these 3 Vancouver comrades you will have an important contribution from out here.

Comrade Phil was of course ultra active during his leisure hours between branch meetings (it was he, and not the comrade assigned, Joyce, who gave the presentation), and it appears they have signed up everyone on the Majority Tendency fan club, including two comrades who have shown a lot of interest and even support for our approach just a few days ago (Ken H. and Don Sage). I would be interesting to know what approach was used to bring them around... I notice the heavy emphasis on the "abstention vote in no instance counts..." (which is of course legitimate) in the question of deciding proportions used for electing delegates. With four supporters here in Vancouver I suppose we are guaranteed 1 delegate, apart from Nick, and they didn't want any possibility of that deadly 2nd...

So we were able to make some telling points on the nature of the present evolution of Waffle (in Ontario) and the PC's feeble attempt to ~~picturte~~ the black cloak of the villian nationalism envelopping poor Waffle and driving it out of the NDP and into the hands of the Canadian bourgeoisie. With only 4 of us and so few of them willing to speak we didn't even take up the time allotted for discussion, a measly hour and a half! Comrade Phil didn't give us much too much to shoot at during his gentlemany introduction but left us with a few gems from his summary, which, by the nature of their timing, went unanswered, conveniently. It seems that it was our mistake all along to support the NDP ~~without~~ "unconditionally". (Ruth Bullock reports how, in 1961 at the time of the launching of the LSA, ~~Malcolm~~ Malcolm Bruch's opinion was that our support of the NDP ought to have been one "without set conditions" and that "unconditional support" should never have been adopted.) Phil: "Revolutionary socialists need a policy of critical support of the NDP"... "We are against unconditional support, as for example is proven by our running a candidate in Quebec against the NDP." I don't know what this indicates of course but we pointed out that this was something new and that the PC was muddling up our strategical approach to the NDP with the tactical questions of our overall orientation.

The critique of MISIC was not as a right-wing tendency this time around, but as a formation shot through with contradictions, un-Leninist and that the acid test of our positions is where do you stand on the class struggle, etc.

Ruth has raised the issue of the 1947 withdrawal from the CCF as a mistake, a decision imposed upon the Vancouver comrades who were involved in important union activity engaged in doing groundwork against the influence of the CP. Perhaps sometime in the discussion or documentation this point will have to be clarified.

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Vancouver B.C.

There has been no presentation of the positions of the RCT here and Phil glossed over it with the excuse that none of their documents (line) have been circulated.

Our latest documentation has just arrived and I read our line document for the first time today -- really excellent; we are clarifying and condensing our line in a clear striking manner for the convention. A good basis to branch out from, and I think that regardless of the vote at the convention we should put the tendency on a footing for a continued literary discussion. We obviously have much to say in developing our theoretical positions and above all on the key tactical questions before the movement. It seems certain that with the Majority line we are in for a very bleak and increasingly difficult period ahead as regards the Canadian section.

Well, I have still some documents to read.

Good luck

With fraternal greetings,

John Darling

Recently an old friend and comrade, Arnie Mintz, passed away. He was brought down by a combination of MS and Parkinson's disease. Arnie's dying was a moment of great sadness for me personally. We had lived and worked together in 1969 as organizers for the League for Socialist Action (LSA) in Winnipeg. The LSA was the Canadian section of the Fourth International founded by Leon Trotsky in 1938. We were two very young, Toronto born and raised radicals, entirely focused on the job at hand. We established a LSA branch in Winnipeg and a Young Socialist (YS) local. We also worked successfully in Saskatchewan. Our job was to spread the vision of Trotskyism, Internationalism and of World Revolution. For the period of time that we worked together it was a successful and rewarding partnership. We achieved the short-term goals that we set out to accomplish.

Living and sharing a space with Arnie was a real challenge for me as I am sure that living with me was for him. Roommates share some of the characteristics of newlyweds as you begin to shape your living space. Arnie and I, as is typical of most young men, were slobs of the highest order. We mostly argued about where we were going to pile our stacks of unwashed clothes and who would remove the moldy food from the fridge. Neither of us had any money and both of us were serious carnivores, we became quite able in our ability to massage capitalism in such a way that, not only did we eat well, but we were able to entertain prospective recruits over dinner. We were ruthless. Shouting the slogan "By Any Means Necessary" we filled the larder.

Shortly before I left Winnipeg. We got the boot from our apartment. The caretaker, who managed the block, was an odious creep and the comings and goings of so many strange looking people, raised his suspicious nature. He unjustly evicted us. I was mad, Arnie was incensed. Arnie devised a plan of revenge. We had an extra and mostly unused room, except for the odd travelling comrade, in the apartment. Under Manitoba law the caretaker was obliged to give us a months notice. Arnie determined that heretofore the extra room was to be the "garbage room". All garbage, especially rotting vegetable manner, was to be dumped in the room and the room sealed. For the entire month we followed this path. I was constantly in fear that some new life form was

We have pretty much forgotten how to do basic Socialist propaganda. Remember the working class vs. the bourgeoisie. All of us against the few of them. They are in total control of the means of dissemination. We need to find a 21st century methodology to combat their horse shit. We need to learn new tricks and approaches to getting our ideas out on a mass basis. We don't have the resources that they do but both the Battle for Seattle and the recent cyber attack on the net gives me hope that just below the surface, a cauldron is boiling. What we have to figure out is how do we harness the steam. For sure, we should do it together.

That's it. I started writing this to honour Arnie Mintz, my old friend and comrade and to assuage my guilt for not having seen him for so long. That all of this came out of my brain really surprised me. I'm not a theory person, never was and never will be. I guess Arnie dying really blew me away.

In 1995 Lyons and myself took a trip east together and we ran into Stew at a Left Caucus meeting of the Ontario NDP. Stew told me about Arnie being laid low with MS. I never went to see him because I remembered the last time I had seen him. Without a doubt, the working partnership we had in Winnipeg was amongst the best experience I ever had. That Arnie is dead without us yet winning a socialist society or even having a good shot at it, is the real tragedy. Arnie was a relentless fighter and whatever our differences, I am proud to be on the same side that he was.